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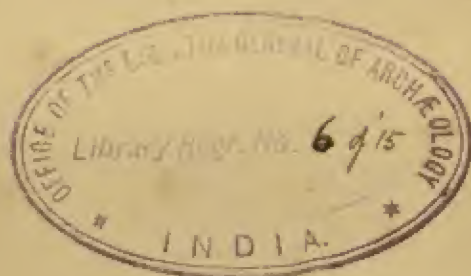
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THE  
SHÁHNÁMA OF FIRDAUSÍ

DONE INTO ENGLISH BY  
ARTHUR GEORGE WARNER, M.A.  
AND  
EDMOND WARNER, B.A.

35447

*"The homes that are the dwellings of to-day  
Will sink 'neath shower and sunbaking to decay,  
But storm and ruin shall never mar what I  
Have built—the palace of my poetry."*

FIRDAUSÍ

VOL. III



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# THE SHÁHNÁMA



## ABBREVIATIONS

C.—Macan's edition of the <i>Sháhnáma</i> .	
L.—Lumsden's	do.
P.—Mohl's	do.
T.—Tihrañ	do.
V.—Vullers'	do.

- BAG. *A History of Ancient Geography*. By E. H. Bunbury, F.R.G.S.
- CIG. *Corpus Inscriptionum Græcarum*.
- DZA. Professor Darmesteter's *Trans. of the Zandavasta in the Sacred Books of the East*. Reference to Parts<sup>1</sup> and pages.
- GIP. *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie*.
- GKS. *Kleine Schriften von Alfred von Gutschmid*.
- HAP. *History of Art in Persia from the French of Georges Perrot and Charles Chipiez*.
- JP. *Persia Past and Present*, by Professor A. V. Williams Jackson.
- LPC. *A View of the History and Coinage of the Parthians*. By John Lindsay, Esq.
- MGN. *Narrative of a Journey through the Province of Khorassan, &c.* By Colonel C. M. MacGregor, C.S.I., C.I.E.
- MHP. *History of Persia*. By Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B.
- NIN. *Das Iranische Nationalepos von Theodor Noldeke*.
- RM. *The Mahábhárata translated into English Prose*. By Pratápa Chandra Ráy, C.I.E.
- RP. Professor Rawlinson's *Parthia in the Story of the Nations' Series*.
- ZT. *Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Mo'hammed-Ben-Djarir-Ben-Yezid Tabari*. Traduite sur la version Persane d'Abou-'Ali Mo'hammed Bel'ami par M. Hermann Zotenberg.

<sup>1</sup> The second edition of Part I. is referred to unless otherwise specified.

## NOTE ON PRONUNCIATION

*ä* as in "water."

*é* as in "pique."

*ê* as in "rude."

*o* as in "servant."

*i* as in "sin."

*u* as in "foot."

*ai* as *i* in "time."

*au* as *ou* in "cloud."

*g* is always hard as in "give."

*kh* as *ch* in the German "buch."

*zh* as *z* in "azure."

II

THE KAIÁNLIAN DYNASTY

*(Continued)*



## XIII

### KAI KHUSRAU

#### HE REIGNED SIXTY YEARS

#### ARGUMENT

Kai Khusrâu succeeds to the throne during the lifetime of his grandfather, Sháh Kai Káuś, and swears to him to avenge the death of Siyáwush. This he achieves after long wars and vicissitudes of fortune ; and then, fearing that, like Jamshid, he too may fall away from holiness by reason of his great successes and half descent from Túr, prays that he may be taken from the world, its temptations, and its evil. His prayers are granted, and, having appointed his successor, he is caught up alive to heaven. In the course of the reign the poet tells two episodic stories, that of the div Akwán, and that of Bizhan and Manísha.

#### NOTE

Kai Khusrâu is the last of the Sháhs in whose names we can trace a connexion with Indian mythology. In the Vedas he appears as Sushrávas. In the *Zandavasta* he is Kavi Husravah and is mentioned often. Like his grandfather Kai Káuś he originated in the ancient nature-worship of the Aryan race, and a trace of his divine origin still clings to him in the *Sháhnáma*, as is shown by his exemption from death. The story of his birth and youth will be found in the reign of Kai Káuś, Parts IV. and V.<sup>1</sup>

The reign of Kai Khusrâu is the longest in the *Sháhnáma* and forms more than a fifth of the whole poem. It is nearly twice as long as "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" combined. It is divided into seven Parts, of which Parts IV. and V. are episodic.

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. ii.

The others carry on and bring to a conclusion the story of the old epic cycle of Írán, the deaths of Íraj, Naudar, Ighrírás, and Siyáwush are avenged, and the royal house of Túrán becomes extinct. Early in the reign a new motive of great importance is introduced, that of the slaughter of the descendants of Gúdarz, who in Part VI. has his revenge on Pírán, just as in Part VII. Kai Khusrau avenges himself on Afrásiyáb. By the end of the reign a clean sweep has been made on the Túránian side, while on the Íránian a great clearance has been effected. Many heroic names drop out of sight, Kai Khusrau and his half-brother Farúd leave no issue,<sup>1</sup> and in the next reign the curtain rises on a complete change of scene and motive. Only Zál and his descendants—great relics of the heroic past—still continue to play their part among "new faces, other minds."

The story is one of almost unceasing warfare, for even the episodes end with battles against Afrásiyáb. Omitting these, four campaigns are fought, the first in Part I., the second in Parts II. and III., the third in Part VI., and the fourth in Part VII. The successive campaigns become more and more elaborate in the method of their presentation, and set forth the gradual progress of the Íránian arms from total defeat to absolute triumph.

In the course of the reign we find a mass of subject-matter of comparatively late growth. It is only in Part VII. that the older legendary strata crop up, and we again find ourselves in touch with the *Zandavasta*, while it is not till the concluding scenes of all that we come upon the ancient legend which may be regarded as the bed-rock of the whole. Another version of it occurs near the end of the great Indian epic, the *Mahábhárata*.<sup>2</sup> This will be given in the Introductory Note to Part VII. in Vol. IV. of this translation, where it may be compared most conveniently with its Íránian equivalent.

It was stated in the Introduction<sup>3</sup> that the *Sháhnáma* was divisible into two periods—a mythic and a historic—and the distinction was based not so much on the nature of the subject-matter as on the names of the chief characters which at a certain point cease to be mythic and become historic. As regards the names of the Sháhs, which were there referred to, this is correct. We are still far from the point in the poem at which such names begin to appear in their proper historic connexion of time and

<sup>1</sup> In the *Zandavasta*, however, Kai Khusrau is represented as having a son named Akhrura, whose legend is lost. DZA, II. 223.

<sup>2</sup> RM, Vol. x., *Maháprasthánika Parva*.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i. p. 49.

place, but it does not follow that all the names occurring before that point is reached are wholly mythical. Real dynastic, family, and personal names are found thrown back upon and incorporated with a mythical past with which they have no connexion whatever. The dynastic title of Caesar, for instance, occurs in the reign of Mithridates,<sup>1</sup> while the personified name—Káran—of a family famous in Ashkánian (Parthian) and Sásánian times is very prominent in the Pishdádian dynasty. The most striking instances of personal names and personalities being thus thrown back occur in the Káranian dynasty and in the reigns of Kai Káús and Kai Khusráu. These we will now proceed to consider.

About A.D. 40 the Parthian king Artabanus III. died. He left at least two sons living at his death—Vardanes, who succeeded him, and Artabanus. Shortly afterward, and during the absence of Vardanes from the capital, a certain Gotarzes assumed the supreme power and caused Artabanus with his wife and son to be murdered. The relationship of Gotarzes to Artabanus III. has been a matter of considerable difference of opinion, but seems fairly settled now by two pieces of contemporary evidence. On the rock of Bihistún, some three hundred feet below the inscription of the great Darius, Gotarzes has left a memorial tablet of himself. Unfortunately it is now almost defaced,<sup>2</sup> but when the late Sir Henry Rawlinson examined it in 1836 he made out, in addition to the name Gotarzes, which is still legible,<sup>3</sup> the word Mithrates, and Gotarzes' description of himself as "Satrap of Satraps." In one corner of the tablet the words "Gotarzes Geopothros" (Γωτάρης Γεωποθρός) were also found. Sir Henry Rawlinson's account was read before the Royal Geographical Society in January 1838.<sup>4</sup>

In the first element in the word "Geopothros" we have, as now seems generally admitted, the historical original of the Giv of the Sháhnáma. In the second element we have the old Persian word "pathra," which means "son." The whole word therefore means "son of Giv." This historical Giv seems to have been prince of Hyrcania and the father-in-law of Artabanus III.<sup>5</sup> He was also, if we accept the evidence of the inscription, the father of Gotarzes.

The second piece of contemporary evidence is a very rare coin of Gotarzes in the corrupted legend on which he is described as "the king of kings, the Arsacid, the adopted son of Artabanus"

<sup>1</sup> *Id.* p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> JP, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> See Journal, Vol. ix. p. 114. and CIG, Vol. iii. No. 4674.

<sup>5</sup> GIP, II. 504.

(ὁὗτος κεκαλούμενος οὐ κεκλημένος Ἀρταβάνου).<sup>1</sup> It appears therefore that Gotarzes was closely connected with the reigning Parthian family both by marriage and adoption, but was not really one of the sons of Artabanus III. as was formerly supposed.

Vardanes, on hearing of Gotarzes' usurpation of the kingdom, hurried back and expelled him. Gotarzes withdrew into his hereditary principality of Hyrcania, where, with the assistance of the Dahae, who dwelt between the Caspian and the Aral, he prepared to renew the struggle. The opposing forces met on the Bactrian plains, but hostilities were averted. Gotarzes had discovered a plot, on the part of the Parthian nobles on both sides, to kill him and Vardanes, and set up a new king in their place. He informed Vardanes of this, and the two combined against the common enemy. Gotarzes then withdrew to Hyrcania and Vardanes retained the crown. Subsequently another war broke out between the two and several battles were fought. Tacitus, the chief authority for this part of history, tells us<sup>2</sup> that Vardanes advanced to meet Gotarzes as far as the river Erinde,<sup>3</sup> at the passage of which severe fighting took place in which Vardanes was victorious, who then in several successful engagements subdued all the nations between that river and the river Sinde, which divided the Dahae and the Aryans.<sup>4</sup> He returned in triumph, but shortly afterward was assassinated while hunting, A.D. 46. Upon this Gotarzes became king, but his ferocity and self-indulgence speedily rendered him unpopular, and a Parthian deputation arrived in Rome in A.D. 49 for the purpose of obtaining from the Emperor Claudius permission for Meherdates, who resided there, to accompany them back to Persia. Meherdates was the son of a former Parthian king, Vonones I. As was to be expected in the circumstances the character of Gotarzes was depicted in very unfavourable colours by the envoys. He had killed all his relations, whether near or distant, with their wives and children; he was sluggish at home, unfortunate in war, and sought to cloak his sloth by

<sup>1</sup> LCP, p. 153 and Plate 3, 70; GKS, III. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Ann. xi. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Generally assumed to be the Charinda mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus (xviii. 6) and by Ptolemy (vi. 2), who describes it as parting Media from Hyrcania.

<sup>4</sup> The rivers Erinde and Sinde have not been identified, but the latter may be intended for the Oxus. That river was confounded with the Indus (Sind) in ancient times (see Vol. I. p. 71) and flowed into the Caspian in the days of Tacitus, so it might be regarded as dividing the Dahae and the Aryans.

cruelty.<sup>1</sup> Meherdates was sent accordingly, but was defeated and taken prisoner by Gotarzes, who, however, rather belied his character for ferocity on this occasion. He spared the life of Meherdates and merely cut off his ears—a mutilation that disqualified him for the Parthian crown. It was to commemorate this victory that Gotarzes had the bas-relief already referred to carved on the rock of Bihistūn, in the neighbourhood of which the battle probably was fought. Gotarzes is represented as charging at the head of his troops, while above him a winged Victory is setting the crown upon his head.<sup>2</sup> He died in A.D. 51.

In the lists of the kings of the Ashkīnian (Parthian) dynasty, compiled by oriental historians,<sup>3</sup> the name Gūdarz occurs in several connexions. We also find the name Bizhan given as the son of one Gūdarz and as the father of another. We also find the name Bahrām. Firdausī, when he reaches Ashkīnian times, includes the above three names in his very scanty list of the kings of that dynasty. He admits that he knows nothing about any of them, being wholly unaware, as naturally he would be, of their identity with some of his own most favourite heroes.

In the *Shāhnāma* Gotarzes becomes Gūdarz, who is represented as being the father, not the son, of Gīv. Vardanes becomes Bahrām and is the son, not the adopted brother, of Gūdarz. Bizhan becomes the son of Gīv and the grandson of Gūdarz. Similarly other names of the Parthian period appear in the poem. Meherdates (Mithradates, Mithrates, Mithradāt, Mīhrdāt) appears as Mīlād, the father of Gurgīn, who plays such a prominent part in the story of Bizhan and Manīzha, (Part V.). Phraates—a common Parthian name—becomes Farhād, and there are other instances.<sup>4</sup> Some of the names thus transplanted have flourished amazingly, and Gotarzes' reputation has not suffered by the change.

We conclude this note with a few instances in which the events of Parthian history summarized above may be traced in a distorted form in the *Shāhnāma*. In the war between Gotarzes and Vardanes we seem to have the origin of the campaigns of Tūā against Tūrān in Parts I. and II. The scene of operations is the same in both cases, and the battle at the river Erinde seems reproduced in that of the river Shahd.<sup>5</sup> The assassination of king Vardanes on the hunting-field is reproduced in the episode in which Bahrām, having lost his whip on the battlefield, insists on returning to look for it, and is, after a gallant defence, mortally wounded by the enemy.<sup>6</sup> It is because Meherdates, after march-

<sup>1</sup> Ann. xii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> GKS, III. 24.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 117 *seq.*

<sup>4</sup> See HAP, p. 39, and RP, frontispiece.

<sup>5</sup> NIN, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 95 *seq.*

ing through Armenia to attack Gotarzes,<sup>1</sup> is let off after his defeat with a slight mutilation that, in the story of Bizhan and Manizha, Gurgin the son of Milád and Bizhan the grandson of Gúdarz set forth together on an expedition to Irmán, that Gurgin treats Bizhan badly and, after having brought him into deadly peril, is lightly punished, then pardoned, and in the end forgiven by Bizhan himself,<sup>2</sup> while lastly it may be noted that the battle with Afrasiyáb, consequent on the release of Bizhan, is stated to have taken place in the neighbourhood of Mount Bistún.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.* xii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 292 *seq.*, 316, 331 *seq.*, 345.

<sup>3</sup> *Of.* pp. 11, 350.

## PART I

### HOW KAI KHUSRAU TO AVENGE SIYÁWUSH SENT A HOST AGAINST TÚRÂN

#### ARGUMENT

The poet, first having set forth the various qualities that kings ought to possess, proceeds to tell how Kai Khusráu becomes joint Sháh with Kai Kásís, who exacts from him an oath that he will avenge the death of Siyáwush. He accordingly assembles the host, and sends it, under the command of Tús, against Afrásiyáb, strictly enjoining the former not to attack Farúd—the half-brother of Kai Khusráu—on the march. Tús out of dudgeon with Kai Khusráu disobeys, and Farúd is slain. The Íránians subsequently are surprised in a night-attack by Pirán and defeated. Kai Khusráu recalls Tús and appoints Fariburz leader, who arranges a month's truce with Pirán, after which the fight is renewed and the Íránians are overthrown at the disastrous battle of Lúdan. They retreat to Írán, and Pirán is splendidly rewarded by Afrásiyáb. The poet in this part records various heroic exploits of Gív, his son Bízhan, and his brother Bahrán, who is slain.

#### NOTE

§§ 1 and 9. There are two Preludes in this Part. The first may be regarded as introductory to the whole reign, specifying as it does the ideal kingly qualities that are to be exemplified in the person of Kai Khusráu, while the second is meant to impress upon the reader the real motives that underlay the conduct of Tús with reference to his treatment of Farúd. Tús, as we have seen, was a disappointed man.<sup>1</sup> Although he was the direct representative of the ancient Pishdádian Dynasty his claim to the crown invariably had been ignored. Despairing, moreover, of ever becoming Sháh himself he had just been advocating the claims of

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 335.

Fariburz to the kingship, in opposition to those of Kai Khusráu, in the hope of becoming at all events a king-maker and the power behind the throne. Again his plans are frustrated, and he vents his spite on Khusráu's half-brother, Farúd.

§ 6. The name of the slave of Tazháv appears variously as Ispanwí and Ispanwí. We adopt the latter.

§ 7. In Bustam's account of the conquest of part of Zábulistán by the Turkmans we seem to have a reminiscence of the permanent occupation of that country (c. 100 B.C.), from which it received the name of Sísitan.<sup>1</sup> Similarly in Kai Káús, Part II., we had a reference to the invasions of Mesopotamia by the Arabs.<sup>2</sup>

§ 10. Kalit is a word used for forts in general, but if, as seems probable, the particular stronghold referred to is that which is now known as Kalit-i-Nádírí, we here find ourselves in the poet's own neighbourhood. Tús, his native place, is said to have been founded by the legendary hero of that name, who plays so prominent a part in this portion of the Sháhnáma, because, in consequence of the death of Farúd, he was afraid to return to the court of Kai Khusráu,<sup>3</sup> but we find nothing to this effect in the Sháhnáma. Kalit-i-Nádírí was so called because Nádír Sháh (A.D. 1736-1747), one of the most remarkable of Persian sovereigns, whose uncle was the ruler of this fortress,<sup>4</sup> was born in its neighbourhood and made it his favourite residence. It is situated some forty miles to the north of the ruins of Tús. "It is upon a very high hill, only accessible by two narrow patha. An ascent of six or seven miles terminates in a plain about twelve miles in circumference, watered by several fine streams and covered with verdure and cultivation. A second ascent, by a route of ten or eleven miles, leads to another plain of greater elevation, but of equal richness."

"It is a district or a basin," says another account, "fortified in the most wonderful way by nature. In shape it is something like a foot, and it must have a length of twenty miles by a breadth of two to four miles . . . if the term impregnable can be used anywhere, it can here. For the fifty miles of its circuit, nature has indeed left hardly anything for man to do."<sup>5</sup>

§ 15. The Rívníz slain by Farúd should be distinguished from the hero of the same name slain at Ládán (§ 30). The former was descended from Pashang<sup>6</sup> and therefore of Pishdádian descent. He is quite appropriately the son-in-law of Tús. The latter is a son of Kai Káús and therefore a Káínian.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> C. Persian Preface, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> MHP, ii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> *id.* i. 34, note.

<sup>6</sup> MGN, ii. 53, 56.

<sup>7</sup> See p. 25.

§ 18. Bizhan's friendship with Gustaham, the son of Gazhdaham, is one of the features of this reign. Another is Giv and Bizhan's anxiety about one another when either is courting danger. The father can never bring himself to realise that his son is grown up and well able to take care of himself, while the son, with all the insolence of youth, persists in regarding his father as played out—touches not foreign to human nature.

§ 30. The battle of Lâdan is also known by the name of the battle of Pashan, and there is a legend that when Firdausi was on his way to seek his fortune at the court of Mahmûd he chanced to enter a garden where three of the seven poets of Mahmûd's court were revelling. He asked to be allowed to join them, and they consented on the condition that he should cap their three rhyming verses with a fourth. Firdausi at once obtained the needful rhyme by a verse referring to the battle of Pashan, whereby he showed his superior knowledge of the epic history of his country.<sup>1</sup> In this connexion the word has sometimes been understood as equivalent to Pashang, the name both of the father and of one of the sons of Afrâsiyâb, but Firdausi's line was intended to celebrate the prowess of Giv at the battle of Pashan or Lâdan. It is possible, however, that these are the names of distinct battles though fought in the same campaign, in which case we may regard the former as the night-surprise and the latter as the occasion when Gûdarz lost nearly all his descendants. Giv distinguished himself at both battles.

The "mountain-skirt" to which the Irânian army withdrew after its defeat seems to be that of the northern scarp of the province of Khurâsân which still goes by the name of Dâman-i-Kuh—the term used in the poem, *cf.* p. 10.

§§ 31-33. See pp. 10, 11. The historical Bahrâm (Vardanes) was, according to Tacitus, a king of exceptional valour and brilliancy.<sup>2</sup>

## § 1

### *The Prelude*

Thus much achieved, the poet will present

Another tale of yore—how Kai Khusrâu  
Sat on the throne and sent an armament

Against Tûrân. Thus, if God's grace allow  
Me life and health, shall I one story more  
Leave to the world from this famed book of lore.

V. 765

<sup>1</sup> See C. Persian Preface, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ann. xi, 10.

When in the garth a cypress sendeth off  
 A shoot, whose green top mounteth palace-high,  
 The tree rejoiceth in the height thereof,  
 Its prudent carriage, and prosperity,  
 The heart of fortune nourisheth the shoot,  
 And all the world partaketh of the fruit.

If sovereignty to native worth be due  
 The wearer of the crown must needs do right ;  
 Three aspects of the matter let us view,  
 And presently a fourth will come in sight :  
 Accomplishment thou wilt not fail to find  
 With high birth and with native worth combined.

Such are the three, and all in one content,  
 For save in company with native worth  
 How can there ever be accomplishment,  
 And, lacking that, what scion of high birth  
 Hast thou beheld ? High birth the father's seed  
 Produceth, which may well fair fruitage breed.

V. 766 Accomplishment thou learnest painfully  
 From others, at the cost of many a groan,  
 While native worth is greatest of the three—  
 A robe of honour given by God alone.  
 To these be wisdom added, that which will  
 Discriminate for thee 'twixt good and ill.

When any man possesseth all the four  
 He hath repose from travail, greed, and grief,  
 But not from death ; that is an evil, sore  
 Beyond all others ; there is no relief.  
 Now Kai Khusrau possessed all four, and he  
 Was fashioned thus by heaven's destiny.

## § 2

*How the Nobles did Homage to Kai Khusrau*

When Kai Khusrau acceded, and the world  
 Had been apprised, he sat upon the throne  
 Of king of kings and donned the crown of greatness.  
 He meted justice out to each, uprooting  
 Injustice from the earth. Then all the nobles,  
 Possessed of crowns and sprung of royal race,  
 With foreign monarchs, potentates, and magnates,  
 Resorted to Khusrau: there was no head  
 Not taken in his toils. He cultivated  
 Waste lands and freed the mourners' hearts from woe;  
 The moisture rained down from the clouds in spring,  
 And cleansed the face of earth from rust and sorrow;  
 'Twas decked like Paradise with goodly havings  
 By reason of his justice and his bounty.  
 The world was full of happiness and peace,  
 The hands of Áhriman were barred from ill,  
 While envoys came from all the provinces,  
 From every man of name and potentate.

V. 767

When tidings had been carried to Nínruz,  
 And reached the chief, the Lustre of the earth:—  
 "The glorious prince is seated on the throne,  
 And hath his foot upon the sky of power,"  
 He summoned his retainers from all sides  
 To go to offer homage to the Sháh,  
 Departing on the journey in great state  
 And much content with Zál the son of Sâm  
 The son of Narímán, and all the nobles,  
 Both great and little of Kábul—a host  
 Which made the desert as 'twere ebony  
 What while the tymbals split the leopards' ears.  
 Zál with an escort led the way; behind  
 Came Rustam followed by the violet flag.

When tidings reached the Sháh: "The loyal Rustam  
Is on his way," the people as one man  
Arose prepared to go to welcome him.  
The Sháh was glad and bade the courier: "Take  
Thy pleasure here, for Rustam reared my father,  
And all eyes recognise his excellence."

The monarch ordered Giv, Gúdarz, and Tús  
To set forth with the tymbals and the pipes,  
The drums beat at the portal of the Sháh,  
And all the warriors assumed their helms.  
From every quarter of the land all went  
With flag and kettledrum to welcome Rustam:  
While those in chief command with many troops  
Went forward two days' journey to receive him.  
As soon as Rustam's standard came in sight,  
And when the host's dust mounted o'er the sun,  
Shouts rose with sound of trump and kettledrum,  
And from the centre Giv, Gúdarz, and Tús  
Approached in haste the elephantine chieftain,  
And gave him salutations joyfully.  
All three of them embraced him; he meanwhile—  
The lion-queller—asked about the Sháh.  
From Rustam they proceeded next to Zál,  
The son of Sám, with open hearts and happy,  
Then turned to Farámarz, rejoiced to see him.  
Thence they approached the Sháh, approached to gaze  
Upon the glorious crown. Now when Khusrau  
Beheld the elephantine warrior  
Tears trickled from his eyelids down his cheeks.  
Descending from the throne he greeted Rustam,  
Who kissed the ground. The Sháh said: "Paladin!  
Live ever glad and happy, for thou art  
The foster-sire of Siyáwush and likewise  
Art of all men most wise and reticent."

He clasped upon his breast the head of Zál,  
And sorrowed for his own sire's sake the while,

Then seated both chiefs on the royal throne,  
And blessed them in God's name. When Rustam  
marked

From head to foot the person of the Sháh,  
And how he sat, held converse, and advised,  
The hero's cheek flushed up and his heart ached,  
So much reminded him of Siyáwush.  
He thus addressed the world's king: "To the world  
Thou art, O Sháh! the memory of thy sire.  
I have not seen a king with Grace like thine,  
Or one so like thy father."

When they rose  
They had the tables spread and wine prepared.  
Khusrau slept not till night was far advanced,  
But held more converse touching what had chanced.

### § 3

*How Kai Khusrau made a Progress through his Realm*

When Sol had drawn its shining scimitar,  
And dark night's head had vanished, rose the blare  
Of trumpets from the court-gate, and such chiefs  
As Tús, Gúdarz, and valiant Gív, Gurgín,  
Ruhhám the Lion, Gustaham, and others,  
Came to the Sháh in that famed audience-hall.  
Now when they had assembled at his throne  
He said to them: "I purpose to survey  
The glorious realm and marches of Írán.  
Go we in hunting wise and fleet a while  
In happiness."

V. 769

The nobles all agreed.  
The monarch of the world went forth to hunt  
With Rustam, that illustrious paladin,  
With Gív, Gúdarz son of Kishwád, Shápúr,  
Bahrám, a wielder of the scimitar,

Gurgín, Bízhan expert in archery,  
 Farhád and Zanga son of Sháwarín,  
 And one among the fighting-men, Guráza—  
 A host that darkened both the sun and moon  
 With helmets, maces, coats of mail, and casques.  
 The tracks and trackless waste were like a field  
 Of battle with the corpses of the game.

Khusrau passed through the country of Írjín,  
 And subsidised and peopled all the lands  
 That then were uninhabited or ravaged,  
 Or ruined by misgovernment; he found  
 No toil in justice or munificence.  
 He tarried in each city and set up  
 His throne as fitted fortune's favourite,  
 Called for his purse and cup, and with dínárs  
 Decked all the world; then sought another city,  
 Conveying with him crown and throne and wine,  
 V. 770 Until with all the great men and the nobles  
 He reached at length Ázar Ábádagán;  
 Then quaffing wine, and urging on his steed,  
 Approached the temple of Ázargashasp,  
 Prayed in that Fane of Fire and praised the Maker.  
 He left in state to go back to Káuś,  
 With whom they sat—a merry company—  
 Not ceasing for a moment from their mirth  
 Till to their heads the sparkling liquor rose,  
 And all went eagerly to seek repose.

## § 4

*How Kai Khusrau means to Kai Káuś to take Vengeance  
 on Afráziyáb*

When morn brought forth bright day, and scattered  
 gems  
 Upon the dusky ground, the world-lord sat

With Kai Káuś—both noble, prosperous Sháhs—  
 With Zál and valiant Rustam. Kai Káuś  
 Discoursed at large on matters great and small,  
 And, first, in speaking of Afrásiyáb,  
 Bathed both his cheeks with blood-drops from his eyes,  
 Recounting what that king had perpetrated  
 On Siyáwush, and how he had sent up  
 Dust from Írán, how many paladins  
 Had died, and how their wives and children suffered,  
 Thus saying: "Thou beholdest many cities  
 Waste in Írán, wrecked by Afrásiyáb.  
 Since every needful, God-sent gift is thine—  
 Men, knowledge, might of hand, Grace, majesty,  
 And favouring stars—and thou in every point  
 Of native worth art raised o'er other kings,  
 I claim of thee an oath, and thou must keep it,  
 That vengeance on Afrásiyáb shall fill  
 Thy heart, and thou shalt not allay that flame,  
 Regardless of his kinship with thy mother,  
 And heeding not what any one may urge.  
 Thou shalt not be seduced by wealth or power,  
 Howe'er thou be exalted or abased,  
 Nor shalt thou turn aside to treat with him  
 For mace or sword or throne or diadem.  
 I will declare the sanction of thine oath—  
 One binding on thy wisdom and thy soul:  
 Swear by the righteous Judge of sun and moon,  
 By crown, throne, casque, and signet, by the justice  
 Of Farídún and by his precedent,  
 The blood of Siyáwush, thy life, O Sháh!  
 The Grace, and by the favouring stars divine,  
 That thou wilt never turn aside to ill,  
 Wilt ask no arbiter but sword and mace,  
 And rise above thyself in thy resolve."

V. 771

Whenas the youthful monarch heard the words  
 He turned both face and soul toward the Fire,

And took an oath: "By God, the Lord of all,  
 By day resplendent and night azure-dim,  
 By sun and moon, by throne and casque and signet,  
 By sword and by the Sháh's own diadem,  
 I never will incline toward amity  
 For him, or dream of looking on his face."

V. 772

This they recorded in the olden tongue  
 With scented ink upon a royal roll,  
 And Zál and Rustam signed as witnesses,  
 And likewise all the other mighty men.  
 The written oath attested in due form  
 Was put for safety into Rustam's hands.  
 When this was done they called for wine and feast,  
 And held a session of another kind;  
 The nobles passed a week with harp and wine  
 Within the hall of Kai Káuś. Khusrau  
 Upon the eighth day bathed, composed himself,  
 Then sought the place of prayer, and, in the presence  
 Of circling heaven's Lord, adored the Maker.  
 That night until the rising of the sun  
 He cried aloud with eyes fulfilled with tears,  
 And said: "O righteous Judge, the only God,  
 The World-lord, the Sustainer, and the Guide!  
 Thus didst deliver me, a hostless boy,  
 Out of the Dragon's breath. Afrásiyáb  
 Thou knowest reckless, not afraid to injure;  
 His curse is on the waste and peopled lands;  
 Revenge against him filleth guiltless hearts.  
 He hath poured fire upon these goodly coasts,  
 Hath sifted o'er the brave the dust of woe,  
 Unjustly shed the blood of Siyáwush  
 Upon the earth, and rent our souls thereby.  
 The hearts of kings are filled with dread of him;  
 His throne and diadem are this world's bane.  
 Thou knowest that he is of evil nature,  
 And both a miscreant and sorcerer."

V. 773

He laid his cheek full oft upon the ground,  
 And uttered praises to the Lord of all.  
 Departing thence he went back to the throne,  
 And thus harangued the exalted paladins:—  
 "O ye my men of name, my gallant hearts,  
 And swordsmen! I have ridden through Írán,  
 But, from the temple of Ázargashasp  
 To this place, seen not any one heart-glad,  
 Possessed of riches or of lands in culture.  
 All have been injured by Afrásiyáb,  
 All hearts are filled with blood, all eyes with tears.  
 I am the first whose liver thus he wounded,  
 So that my soul and body smart through him.  
 And next there is that noble Sháh—my grandsire—  
 Who from his heart still heaveth chilly sighs,  
 While men and women groan throughout Írán  
 At massacre and pillage, war and raid.  
 So now if ye are all my trusty friends,  
 Devoted to me in your hearts indeed,  
 I will make ready to avenge my father,  
 And turn this evil from the Íránians.  
 If ye will, all of you, renew the fight,  
 Strive, and contend like pards, so too will I;  
 Plains in the battles of the brave shall turn  
 To mountains, and for all the blood shed there  
 Afrásiyáb the criminal shall be  
 Responsible. If any of our host  
 Shall fall, their place is Paradise above.  
 What say ye then? What answer do ye give?  
 Advise me well. Afrásiyáb, ye know,  
 Began the wrong. Requital should not rest."

V. 774

The chiefs prepared to answer and arose  
 With rancour in their hearts. They said: "O Sháh!  
 Keep thy heart glad and ever free from care.  
 Our bodies and our souls are wholly thine,  
 And thine our grief and joy, our loss and gain.

We all of us are mother-born to die,  
And all of us, though free men, are thy slaves."

Whenas he heard this answer from the throng,  
From Tús, Gúdarz, and elephantine Rustam,  
The Sháh's cheek grew as red as cercis-bloom,  
For he was young in person and in fortune.  
He called down blessings on the company;  
"May earth be peopled by the brave," said he.

v. 775

## § 5

*How Kai Khusraú numbered the Paladins*

With matters in this stay the sky revolved  
Till Sol appeared in Virgo; then the Sháh  
Called all the archimages of the realm,  
And spake to them at large in fitting terms.  
He closed the door of audience for two sennights,  
And had the muster-roll compiled afresh.  
He bade the commissaries to call over  
The names of great and small, and had them written  
In solemn form befitting paladins.  
The kin of Kai Káús five score and ten—  
Chiefs of the host—came first upon the list,  
And at their head was Fariburz the son  
Of Kai Káús—the new Sháh's kinsman. Next  
He chose him eighty scions of Naudar,  
All armed with maces and all warriors.  
Their leader was Zarásp the general,  
Who used to make their welfare his concern  
In everything—a crown of kings, the son  
Of Tús—the lord of iron mace, of scimitar,  
And drum. Gúdarz son of Kishwád came next,  
Whose counsels were the safeguard of the host.  
His sons and grandsons numbered seventy-eight—  
Brave mountaineers and horsemen of the plain;

They carried Káwa's standard and illumed  
The throne and fortune of the Kaian race.  
The seed of Gazhdaham were sixty-three,  
And great men all ; their chief was Gustaham.  
The kinsmen of Mílád—a hundred horsemen—  
Had for their chief victorious Gurgin.  
Tawába's kindred numbered eighty-five  
Brave cavaliers, the wardens of the treasure,  
While Barta was the warden over them,  
And most illustrious of them all in fight.  
Next three and thirty scions of Pashang,  
Brave men, who bore the double-headed dart  
In battle-time, their chieftain was Rívníz—  
A mighty man both valiant and discreet,  
Who used to go before the drums in war,  
The warriors' warden, son-in-law to Tús.  
The kinsmen of Barzín, three score and ten  
In sum, all Lions on the day of battle,  
Had over them Farhád, himself an Anvil  
Of steel in fight. Guríza led in person  
His kinsmen—five score and five warriors.  
Apart from these, the lords and paladins,  
The princes and the mighty men of worship,  
Were more than any archimage could reckon,  
So many were the chiefs with Grace and glory !  
They wrote upon the monarch's muster-roll  
The names of all efficient, and the Sháh  
Bade them to quit the city and march out  
Toward the wastes and plains. He said to them :—  
“ About the ending of the month must rise  
The clarion-blast and sound of Indian bells,  
And all must march with joy against Túrán.”

They bent their heads before him to the ground,  
And all called blessings down upon him, saying :—  
“ O Sháh possessed of Grace divine and glory,  
Who givest lustre to the crown and girdle !

We all are slaves, thine is the sovereignty,  
From Aries to Pisces all for thee."

## § 6

*How Kai Khusrau bestowed Treasures upon the Paladins*

Wherever there were horses running wild  
Their keepers drove them to the camp in herds.  
The Sháh commanded: "Let the lasso-throwers—  
The warriors brazen-bodied in the fight—  
V. 777 Catch these swift Arab chargers in the noose."

Anon the conquering world-lord took his seat  
With mace in hand upon the throne of gold,  
Unlocked his treasury of dinárs, and said:—  
"The treasures of the great should not be hidden.  
In times of strife and fighting for revenge  
They look with scorn on treasure and dinárs;  
So all our wealth and thrones will we bestow  
Upon the brave, to make our Tree fruit sunward,  
And why delay since treasure helpeth them?"

A hundred pieces of brocade of Rám  
With jewelled patterns on a golden ground,  
With beaver-skins, gold raiment, and a goblet  
Of royal gems—he had these brought. "Behold,"  
Said he, "the price set on the worthless head  
Of that fierce Dragon, murderous Paláshán,  
Now made commander by Afrásiyáb<sup>1</sup>  
That he may slumber while that chieftain watcheth,  
Who in our camp will bring his head and sword  
And steed to dust upon the day of battle?"

Bízhan the son of Gív sprang to his feet  
Forthwith, he undertook to slay that Dragon,  
And carried off the stuffs and cup of gold,

<sup>1</sup> Pirán was at that time in disgrace with Afrásiyáb, owing to the escape of Kai Khusrau. See Vol. II, p. 390.

With all the jewels, blessing Kai Khusrâu,  
 And saying: "May this crowned head live for ever!"  
 Then went back to his seat retaining still  
 The goblet with the jewels in his hand.  
 The Shâh then bade his treasurer to bring  
 Two hundred robes of gold embroidery  
 With beaver-skins, brocade, rich painted silk,  
 And two slaves rosy-cheeked with girded loins,  
 And thus he said: "These presents will I give,  
 And will confer more favours on, the man  
 That bringeth unto me, or to the chieftains  
 Assembled here, the crown worn by Tazhâv,  
 Which crown Afrâsiyâb set on his head,  
 And hailed him as a high-born son-in-law."<sup>1</sup>

V. 778

Again Bîzhan the son of Gîv arose,  
 Who had a hand far reaching in the fight,  
 And seized upon the presents and the slaves  
 While all assembled wondered; he exclaimed:—  
 "May earth be prosperous under Kai Khusrâu!"  
 Then sat down gladly giving many thanks.  
 The Shâh commanded and the treasurer  
 Brought out ten slave-boys with their girdles on,  
 Ten steeds of rapid pace with golden bridles,  
 And ten veiled maidens in their bravery;  
 The watchful ruler of the people said:—  
 "These steeds and all these Beauties are for one  
 Who, when Tazhâv hath fled, need not possess  
 A lion's heart. Tazhâv hath by his side  
 In battle one whose voice would tame a leopard,  
 A slave with cheeks like spring, of cypress-stature,  
 With reed-like waist and with a pheasant's gait,  
 A Moon-face, Ispanwî by name, a Jasmine  
 In visage, heart-alluring, breathing musk.  
 Her captor must not strike her with the sword,  
 For swords are not for such a cheek as hers,

<sup>1</sup> Tazhâv, an Irânian by birth, had gone over to Afrâsiyâb. See p. 75.

But noose her waist and take her to his bosom."

V. 779 Bizhan smote on his breast and volunteered  
Again. He drew anigh the all-conquering Sháh,  
Began to laud the monarch of the world,  
And supplicate the Maker. The great king  
Rejoiced in him and spake thus: "Famous chief!  
May paladin like thee ne'er help our foes,  
Ne'er may thine ardent soul and body part!"

Then said the world-lord to the treasurer:—  
"Bring forth ten golden beakers from the hoard,  
And let them put pastilles therein; bring also  
Ten goblets of pure silver brimmed with jewels,  
One topaz goblet filled with musk, and one  
Of turquoise, one of lapis-lazuli,  
With emeralds and carnelians showered therein,  
Mixed with rose-water and with musk; ten boy-slaves  
With belts, and ten fine steeds with golden bridles.  
These are," he said, "for him who, having strength  
To fight Tazháv upon the day of battle,  
Shall bear his head off from the stricken field,  
And bring it to the warriors of the host."

Then Gív son of Gúdarz smote on his breast,  
And undertook to fight that paladin,  
Whereat they brought those noble slaves and gifts,  
And set them in array in front of him.  
He called down many blessings on the Sháh,  
And said: "May crown and signet ne'er lack thee."

The Sháh commanded then the treasurer:—  
"Set out ten golden trays before the throne,  
And mix in them dínárs and musk and jewels;  
Set too ten Fairy-faced with crowns and girdles,  
Two hundred beaver-skins, brocade of gold,  
Ten girdles, and a royal diadem.  
This is for him," he said, "that grudgeth not  
His labour for the sake of fame and treasure.  
Let such depart hence to the Kása rúd,

And there salute the soul of Siyáwush.  
 He will behold a mighty pile of fire-wood,  
 Whose height is greater than ten lassos' length.  
 It is a pile raised by Afrásiyáb  
 Upon the spot whereat he crossed the river.  
 He wished that none should pass there from Írán  
 Túrán-ward. Some bold warrior must go hence,  
 And make the Kása rúd a sheet of flame,  
 So that if e'er it be the scene of fight  
 The wood may prove no cover for the foe."

V. 780

Again Gív spake: "This is my quarry; mine  
 Shall be the task to set the pile a-blaze.  
 I fear not combat if the foe shall come,  
 But will invite the vultures to a feast."

The Sháh bestowed on Gív those goods as well,  
 And said to him: "Famed chieftain of the host!<sup>1</sup>  
 May this bright crown ne'er lack thy sword. So be it.  
 Oh! may the Brahman never lack the Idol!"

He ordered: "Let the treasurer produce  
 Forthwith a hundred divers-hued brocades,"  
 Chose from his hoards a hundred lustrous pearls—  
 "All drops of water frozen," thou wouldst say—  
 And brought out from the women's bower five handmaids,  
 Whose heads and tresses were concealed by crowns.  
 He said: "This is a present meet for one  
 Whose wisdom is the king of his pure mind—  
 A daring, prudent man and eloquent,  
 Who turneth not from lions in the fight—  
 If he will carry to Afrásiyáb  
 A message, weeping not for dread of him,  
 And will convey his answer back to me.  
 Who of this noble company will dare?"

Gurgín son of Mílád held forth his hand,  
 And gat him ready for that enterprise.  
 The Sháh bestowed on him the slaves, the robes

<sup>1</sup> Reading with P.

Of gold-embroidery, and royal gems.  
 He called down blessings on the Sháh and said :—  
 " May wisdom wed the soul of Kai Khusrau ! "

- V. 781      Whenas earth's face grew black as raven's plumes,  
 And when night's Lamp rose o'er the hills, the Sháh  
 V. 782      Went to his palace, and his mighty men  
 Departed, each one to his home again.

## § 7

*How Kai Khusrau sent Rustam to the Land of Hind*

When daylight made the hills like sandarac,  
 And cockcrows reached the clouds, the matchless  
     Rustam

With Farámarz and with Zawára came  
 Before the Sháh to speak about Írán,  
 The crown, the state, and matters great and small.  
 Then Rustam said : " Illustrious, glorious Sháh !  
 There is a district in Zábulistán,

That formed a portion of the realm of Túr  
 Till Minúchihr drove all the Turkmans out.

It is a goodly and a glorious land ;  
 But when Káuś grew hoar and spiritless,  
 When fame, the Grace, and prowess quitted him,  
 Túrínians seized it and Íránians ceased

Therein.<sup>1</sup> The folk now carry to Túrán  
 Both toll and tribute, heeding not the Sháh.

- V. 783      The march is full of elephants and treasure,

The innocent are troubled by this folk  
 With constant pillage, massacre, and raid,  
 And all the insolency of Túrán.<sup>2</sup>

Now that the kingship of Írán is thine,  
 Thine from the ant's foot to the lion's claws,

<sup>1</sup> See Introductory Note to this Part.

<sup>2</sup> Or " And have rebelled against Túrínian pride."

"Twere well to send a valiant paladin,  
And mighty host, to make this people bring  
Their tribute to the Sháh and look to him.  
This region ours we can defeat Túrán."

The Sháh said: "Live for ever! Thou art right.  
Take order for sufficiency of troops,  
Selecting all the famous warriors,  
For since the district marcheth with thine own  
Its purchase will be worthy of thy fame.  
Commit a mighty host to Farámaz,  
As many warriors as shall suffice.  
The business will succeed with him; his hook  
Will catch the crocodiles."

The paladin  
With flushing cheeks called many a blessing down  
Upon the Sháh, who bade the chamberlain  
To spread the board, bring wine, call minstrelsy,  
And listened spell-bound to their melody.

V. 784

## § 8

*How Kai Khusráu reviewed the Host*

When bright Sol rose above the hills, and when  
The minstrels tired of song, the kettledrums  
Clanged at the court-gate and the troops drew up  
Before the palace. On the elephants  
They bound the tymbals and the trumpets blared.  
Upon one elephant they set a throne;  
That royal Tree bore fruit; the Sháh came forth,  
And took his seat, crowned with a jewelled casque.  
He wore a torque of royal gems and held  
An ox-head mace. Two earrings, decked with pearls  
And precious stones, depended from his ears;  
His bracelets were of jewels set in gold;  
His belt was pearls and gold and emeralds.

His elephant with golden bells and bridle  
 Proceeded to the centre of the host.  
 He had with him the ball within the cup;  
 The shouting of the army rose to Saturn;  
 The earth grew black and heaven azure-dim  
 With all the swords and maces, drums and dust;  
 Thou wouldst have said: "The sun is in a net,"  
 Or "Water hath o'erwhelmed the arching sky!"  
 The clearest sight could not behold the world,  
 Or gaze upon the sky and stars for spears;  
 Thou wouldst have said: "The billows of the sea  
 Are rising," as the host marched troop by troop.  
 They brought the camp-enclosure from the palace  
 Forth to the plain, and shoutings frayed the skies.

V. 785

The custom was that when that famous Sháh  
 Upon his elephant let fall the ball  
 Within the cup, and girt his loins, no place  
 Remained for any one throughout the realm  
 Save at the Sháh's own gate. Such was the token  
 To all his realm of that famed king of chiefs.

The Sháh remained upon his elephant  
 On that broad plain to see the troops march past.  
 First to defile before the world's new lord  
 Was Fariburz with golden boots, with mace,  
 And sword. Behind him was his flag sun-blazoned.  
 He rode a chestnut steed, his lasso coiled  
 Was in the saddle-straps. He passed along  
 In pride with Grace and lustre, his retainers  
 Were buried in their gold and silver trappings.  
 The world-lord blessed him, saying: "May the  
 greatness

And Grace of heroes ever be thine own,  
 Thy fortune triumph in each enterprise,  
 Thy whole existence be a New Year's Day;  
 May health be thine in all thy goings forth,  
 And no infirmity on thy return."

Behind him was Gúdarz son of Kishwád,  
 Whose counsel brought the world prosperity.  
 A lion clutching mace and scimitar  
 Was charged upon the flag that followed him.  
 Upon his left hand marched the brave Ruhhám,  
 And on his right the noble Gív; Shírásh  
 Behind him bore the banner lion-charged,  
 Which threw a violet lustre on the ground,  
 While thousands of exalted warriors followed,  
 All cavaliers and armed with lengthy lances.  
 Behind Gív and accompanied by troops  
 His sable banner came charged with a wolf,  
 While of Ruhhám, that man of high ambition,  
 The flag rose cloudward tiger-charged. These sons  
 And grandsons of Gúdarz were seventy-eight  
 In number, and they crowded that broad plain,  
 Each followed by his flag distinct in hue—  
 All valiant men with swords and golden boots.  
 "The whole world," thou hadst said, "is 'neath  
 Gúdarz,

V. 786

The chiefs' heads are beneath his scimitar."  
 He called down blessings on the crown and throne  
 As he approached; the Sháh returned the blessings  
 On him, on Gív, and all his warriors.  
 The next behind Gúdarz was Gustaham,  
 The son of Gazhdaham the vigilant;  
 His weapon in the battle was a spear,  
 His comrades were a bow and poplar arrows;  
 And when a shaft went flying from his arm  
 'Twould pierce a rock or anvil to the core.  
 He was attended by a mighty host  
 With maces, scimitars, and rich array.  
 His banner blazoned with a moon waved o'er him,  
 And raised its head resplendent to the clouds.  
 He called down benedictions on the Sháh,  
 Who gloried in him. Next came shrewd Ashkash,

Endowed with prudent heart and ready brain.  
 His troops were from Balúchistán and Kutch,  
 And very rams to fight. No one had seen  
 Their backs in battle or one finger mailless;  
 Their banner was a pard with claws projecting.  
 Ashkash felicitated Kai Khusrau  
 At large upon the happy turn of fortune.  
 V. 787 Meanwhile the Sháh upon his elephant  
 Surveyed the troops, whose ranks stretched out two  
 miles,

And in abundant satisfaction blessed  
 His sleepless fortune and his glorious land.  
 Behind Ashkash was well approved Farhád,  
 Who tendered all the troops, and everywhere  
 Was like their foster-father in the fight.  
 He had a banner charged with a gazelle,  
 Whose shadow fell upon him as he rode.  
 His troops were all equipped with Indian swords,  
 With Turkman armour and with Sughdian saddles.  
 They all were princely scions of Kubád,  
 And all were dowered with God's Grace and with  
 justice;

The face of each was like the shining moon,  
 And like the shining sun in battlefield.  
 Farhád beheld the throne's new occupant,  
 And called down blessings on the youthful Sháh.  
 Guráza, eldest offspring of Gívgán,  
 Came next accompanied by all his kin,  
 A favourite in whom the Sháh rejoiced.<sup>1</sup>  
 Upon his saddle was a lasso coiled;  
 He bore a banner blazoned with a boar;  
 His troops were warriors and lasso-flingers.  
 These cavaliers and heroes of the plain  
 Saluted many times and then marched past.  
 Behind him Zanga son of Sháwarán

<sup>1</sup> Reading with P. †

Came rushing with his gallant hearts and chieftains.  
 Behind him was his flag charged with an eagle,  
 And as a moving mountain so moved he.  
 Ofttimes he called down blessings on the Sháh,  
 His mien and stature, sword and signet-ring.  
 All that were from the country of Baghdád  
 Were armed with lances and steel swords, and marched  
 Beneath the eagle while their general  
 Himself was seated on an elephant.  
 Behind him was the valiant Farámarz  
 Of noble stature, Grace, and majesty,  
 With tymbals, elephants, and many troops,  
 All eager for the fray, and mighty men  
 Brought from Kashmír, Kábulistán, Nímruz,  
 All noble and the lustre of the world.  
 He had a banner like his valiant sire's—  
 That Rustam who could be surpassed by none—  
 With seven heads, "The heads as of a dragon  
 That had escaped from bonds," thou wouldst have  
 said.

V. 788

In favour like a fruitful tree he came,  
 And uttered many a blessing on the Sháh,  
 Who with a heart that joyed at Farámarz  
 Gave him much prudent rede and said to him :—  
 "The nursling of the elephantine chief  
 Will be pre-eminent among the people.  
 Thou art the son of wary-hearted Rustam,  
 Thou art from Zál—Sám's son—and Narímán.  
 Now is the land of Hindústán thine own,  
 All from Kannúj up to Sistán is thine;  
 So bear thyself that harm may not befall  
 Him that assayeth not to fight with thee.  
 In every place be thou the poor man's friend,  
 Be noble unto those of thine own kin,  
 See heedfully what friends thou hast, and who  
 Are men of wisdom and can soothe thy griefs,

V. 789

Give, entertain, and never say: 'To-morrow.'  
 How know'st thou what to-morrow will bring forth?  
 I have bestowed on thee this kingship. Hold it.  
 Make no war anywhere in wantonness,  
 Be not in youth acquisitive of treasure,  
 Aggrieve not any that hath not grieved thee,  
 And trust not thou this treacherous dwelling-place;  
 Tis sandarac and ebony by turns.  
 Thy duty is to leave a noble name,  
 And mayst thou never have a sorry heart.  
 For thee and me alike the day will pass,  
 And turning heaven reckon up thy breaths.  
 Thou need'st a happy heart, a body hale;  
 Consider if a third thing is to seek.  
 May He who made the world be gracious to thee,  
 And smoke fill thy foes' hearts."

The chief, on hearing

The words of this new master of the world,  
 Dismounted from his fleet steed, and invoked  
 Full many a blessing on the young Sháh, saying:—  
 "Mayst thou wax even as the new moon waxeth."

He kissed the ground and, having done obeisance,  
 Turned and departed on his longsome journey,  
 While matchless Rustam, with his brain distraught  
 At losing Farámarz, accompanied

V. 790 His son two leagues, instructing him withal

In warfare, feast, and wisdom, wishing him

V. 791 A life of joy; then sadly turned and went

Back from the desert to the tent-enclosure.

The Sháh got off his lusty elephant,

And, mounting on a rapid-footed steed,

Withdrew in state to his pavilion,

With aching heart and deeply pondering.

When Rustam had returned the wine was brought;

Khusrau filled up a mighty bowl, and said:—

"Mirth as thy mate sufficeth, and no sage

Will name to-morrow. Where are Túr and Salm  
 And Farídún? All lost and one with dust!  
 We go about and toil and gather wealth,  
 Yet frustrate all the wishes of our hearts,  
 Since in the end the dust will be our share,  
 And not one of us will escape that day.<sup>1</sup>  
 Fleet we the darksome night with goblets brimmed,  
 And when day cometh with its measured steps  
 We will command that Tús shall blow the trumpet,  
 That tymbal, kettledrum, and clarion sound;  
 Then shall we see o'er whom the turning sky  
 Will stretch its hand in love in this campaign.  
 And yet what profit is our toil to us  
 Since from the first what is to be will be?  
 We shall be quit alike of good and ill;  
 Why should a wise man gorge himself with care?  
 Still by the aid of Him who made us all  
 I will take vengeance for my father's fall"

## THE STORY OF FARÚD THE SON OF SIYÁWUSH

### § 9

#### *The Prelude*

Let no king, great and warlike though he be,  
 Intrust his army to an enemy,  
 One from whose eyelids tears of envy pour,  
 Tears such as leeches know no drugs to cure;  
 For such a man, if of a noble race,  
 Will chafe to be denied the highest place,  
 To be a slave with wish insatiate,

V. 792

<sup>1</sup> The speaker, however, proved to be an exception.

And only speak as others may dictate.  
 No wisdom can the monarch's heart attend  
 Who calleth such a man as this a friend,  
 For if heaven hostile to his wishes prove,  
 And hath no blessing for him in its love,  
 He will be prone to act no friendly part ;  
 The thwarted wish will rankle in his heart.  
 No sage would reckon him a man at all  
 That hath not wisdom for his pedestal,  
 And thou wilt see, when thou shalt hear this tale,  
 How far an evil nature may prevail.

## § 10

*How Tús went to Turkistán*

When Sol arose in all its majesty,  
 And sat upon its lofty eminence,  
 Ascendant in the Sign of Aries,  
 While all the world became like golden wine,  
 The tymbals sounded from the court of Tús  
 With blare of trump and roll of kettledrum.  
 The battle-shout went up throughout the realm,  
 The air was full of war-cries, earth of turmoil.  
 The neighs and the shouts frayed Luna from her course,  
 While from the clash of arms and trumpeting  
 Of elephants thou wouldst have said : " The Nile  
 Hath overflowed the world ! " The air was yellow,  
 Red, blue, and violet as Káwa's standard  
 'Mid cavaliers—the kinsmen of Gúdarz—  
 Waved. Kai Khusrau with crown and mace and  
 trumpets  
 Came to the entering in of his pavilion.  
 Tús with the golden boots and Káwa's flag  
 Set forth and with the great men that wore torques

And crowns—the aspiring kindred of Naudar—  
 Went proudly from the host before Khusrau.  
 The banner o'er them bore an elephant,  
 Its golden staff-head rising to the clouds.  
 They went together, like a darksome mountain,  
 And sun and moon ceased shining. When they came  
 With flags and helms in haste before the Sháh  
 He bade the chieftain Tús present to him  
 The warriors of distinction in the host,  
 And thus addressed them: "Tús is chief; he hath  
 The flag of Káwa; do as he commandeth."

Then in their sight he gave his signet-ring  
 To Tús, and said: "He is your chief and leader."  
 To Tús himself he said: "Be true to me,  
 And mark mine institutions and commands:  
 No one must be molested on the march,  
 Such is the custom of my crown and throne.  
 Let no cold blast befall the husbandman,  
 Or artisan, or one that armeth not  
 Against thee; strive but with antagonists.  
 Refrain from troubling those who are at ease  
 Since all will have to quit this Wayside Inn.  
 Thou shalt on no account pass by Kalát,  
 For, if thou dost, things will go hard with thee.  
 To Siyáwush (his soul be as the sun,  
 His place all hopeful in the other world!)  
 The daughter of Pírán once bare a child<sup>1</sup>  
 But little shown in public by his sire.  
 He is my brother and resembleth me.  
 He is a youth of mine own age, high-fortuned,  
 And liveth with his mother at Kalát;  
 A world-lord he who hath the Grace and troops.  
 He knoweth no Íránian e'en by name,  
 And from that quarter thou must turn thy bridle,  
 For he hath troops and famous men of war

V. 794

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II. p. 291.

Upon a mountain steep and hard to reach.  
 He is a brave and warlike cavalier,  
 Great through his native worth and famed of person,  
 And therefore thou must take the desert-road:  
 It is not well to touch the claws of lions."

Tús answered: "In thy counsels is success,  
 By that way which thou biddest will I go,  
 For good alone must come of thy behest."

He then departed quickly, and the Sháh  
 Returned with loyal Rustam to the throne,  
 Where sitting with that elephantine hero,  
 The lords, archmagas, and the stainless princes,  
 He spake at large about Afrásiyáb,  
 His own heart's anguish and his father's wrongs.

V. 795

Tús for his part with all his warriors  
 Came to a place where two roads met; the one  
 Went through a desert dry and waterless,  
 The other by Kalát and toward Charam.  
 The elephants and kettledrums were halted  
 Till Tús the general should come up, that so  
 The host might take the road that pleased him best.  
 When Tús had at his leisure reached the chiefs  
 He spake about the waterless, hot road;  
 Then to Gúdarz: "Although this arid waste  
 Yield ambergris for dust and musk for soil,  
 Still on a long and toilsome march we need  
 Repose and water. Our best route will be  
 Kalát, Charam, encamping at Mayam,  
 With streams and fertile country on both sides:  
 Why choose a desert and its miseries?  
 I went along that way in former times,  
 When Gazhdaham was leader of the host,  
 And never saw so troublesome a road  
 Although the ups and downs are few enough.  
 'Tis best to march along the other route,  
 And measure not the desert and its leagues."

V. 796

Gúdarz replied : " The noble Sháh made thee  
 Commander of this host ; lead as he bade ;  
 Make not the troops' march grievous. They should not  
 By disobedience to the great king's orders  
 Be injured thus."

Tús said : " O famous warrior !  
 Think not such things ; this will not vex the Sháh,  
 And therefore need not be a grief to thee."

He spake and bade the army to proceed,  
 And march toward Kalát and to Charam ;  
 And, since Khusrau's commands he minded not,  
 See what a Tempest proved at last his lot !

### § 11

#### *How Farúd heard of the Coming of Tús*

News reached Farúd : " The bright sun's face is dark-  
 ened

By dust raised by the feet of elephants  
 And camels ; earth is like the river Nile.  
 Thy brother's army marcheth from Írán  
 Against Túrán for vengeance, purposing  
 To take the road that leadeth to Kalát.  
 I know not where their battlefield will be."

V. 797

The inexperienced youth on hearing this  
 Grew very sore of heart and dark of soul.  
 He came down from the hold, unbarred the gate,  
 And going forth surveyed the lofty mountain.  
 At his command they brought in all the camels,  
 The sheep, and horses ; none remained on waste  
 Or hill ; he drove them all toward Mount Sapad  
 And toward Ambúh, returned, secured the gate,  
 And mounted on a rapid-footed steed.

When from Mayam the sound of drums arose,  
 And from Charam dust-clouds like ebony,

Jaríra, gazing from the castle-roof,  
 Felt her heart throb in terror of that host.  
 To her, his mother, came the young Farúd,  
 And said: "O chief of ladies! from Irán  
 A host hath come with elephants and tymbals,  
 And Tús the general is in command.

V. 798      What sayest thou? What is the course to take?  
 We must prevent him from attacking us."

Jaríra said to him: "O warrior!  
 Be all thy days as fortunate as this!  
 Thy brother is the new Sháh of Irán:  
 A world-lord shrewd is Kai Khusrau, and he  
 Well knoweth both thy name and native worth.  
 One father's blood and bone are in you both,  
 And Siyáwush was peerless in the world.  
 Well may the age applaud him! At the outset  
 Pírán gave me to him; he would not else  
 Have sought a Turkman spouse. Thus thy descent  
 On both sides is illustrious and royal.  
 Now, since thy brother seeketh to avenge,  
 And vindicate, the soul of Siyáwush,  
 Thou shouldst be foremost in the race for vengeance,  
 In making ready and exacting it.  
 Don Rúman mail and go with raging heart,  
 And shouts of battle ringing in thy head,  
 For, since he seeketh vengeance on your grandsire,  
 Thy part should be revenge, not policy,  
 In that this grief may well make leopards wail,  
 And crocodiles come groaning from the river.  
 The birds too and the fishes in the water  
 Call curses down upon Afrásiyáb,  
 For in the whole world not one sovereign  
 That girdeth girdle is like Siyáwush  
 In prowess, manhood, fortune, and high birth,  
 In glory, weight, intelligence, and justice.  
 Thou art the son of that world-famous chief,

Art of the Kaian seed and look'st it too !  
 Thou must gird up thy loins then to avenge  
 Thy sire and prove thy birth and native worth.  
 See who the leader is of yonder host,  
 Show hospitality, invite the lords,  
 And set upon the tables wine and gifts  
 Of scimitars, of helmets, of horse-armour,  
 Of coats of mail, and Indian swords. Thy brother  
 Is wealth sufficient for thee in this world.  
 Shall such just vengeance fall to aliens ?  
 At this conjuncture lead his troops thyself,  
 New in revenge as he is new in reign."

V. 799

Farúd said : " Which of them must I address  
 Since I must have some helper 'mid these men,  
 These men so haughty on the day of battle,  
 Because I know not one of them by name ?  
 How shall I send them greeting and a message ? "

Jaríra answered : " In the dust afar  
 Raised by the host look for two cavaliers,  
 Bahrán and Zanga son of Sháwarán.  
 Search for the blazons of these two great heroes,  
 For thou and I have nothing hid from them.  
 Oh ! may thy head and name survive for ever,  
 And may the soul of Siyáwush be bright !  
 He and these twain were never separable,  
 They were his lords, he was their over-lord.  
 Go with Tukhár, but with no further escort,  
 And do not in thy heart misprize my words :  
 When thou shalt ask about the chiefs and warriors  
 The brave Tukhár will point them out, for he,  
 Well knowing all the Íránians, great and small,  
 Will show thee sheep and shepherds."

V. 800

" Noble lady ! "

Replied Farúd, " thy rede enlighteneth  
 Thy kin and folk."

A watchman from the look-out

Came, told Farúd about that host, and said :—  
 "The mountains, vales, and plains are filled with troops,  
 And thou wouldst say : 'The sun is put in duress !'  
 The expanse of rock up to the castle-door  
 Is all flag, elephant, and warrior !"

## § 12

*How Farúd and Tukhár went to view the Host*

Tukhár departed with Farúd—a youth  
 Whom fortune had abandoned. Whensoever  
 The sky above us is untowardly  
 No gentleness or rage availeth thee.  
 They chose the summit of a lofty mountain,  
 Commanding all the army of Írán,  
 And marvelled at the troops and their equipment.  
 The youth said to his confidant Tukhár :—  
 "Conceal not aught of what I ask of thee.  
 Tell me the names of all that thou beholdest—  
 The man of rank, the bearer of the flag,  
 The lord of partisan and golden boot—  
 All whom thou recognisest of Írán."

The Íránian host defiled between two mountains,  
 And what with golden helm and golden shield,  
 With golden ax and golden partisan,  
 Thou wouldst have said : "No gold is left unmined,  
 A cloud hath risen and rained jewelry !"

V. 801

The roar of kettledrums along the pass  
 Affrayed the vultures as they flew o'erhead,  
 While thirty thousand sword and buckler men  
 Marched bravely on in all points dight for war.

Now when Tukhár had scanned the host, the prince  
 Began to question him. That expert answered :—  
 "I will clear up what is obscure to thee :  
 Know that yon flag charged with an elephant,

Those horsemen, and those blue steel scimitars,  
Belong to noble Tús the general—  
A bad opponent when he seeketh vengeance.  
Behind him is another standard bearing  
A blazing sun: 'tis that of Fariburz,  
Son of Káu's, a general, thine uncle,  
A man of Grace and purpose. Next to him  
There is a mighty flag, its charge a moon,  
With many valiant warriors. The chief  
Call Gustaham the son of Gazhdabam,  
Whom no two-headed dart or club affrayeth.  
Next yon tall flag charged with an onager,  
Encompassed by a band of warriors,  
Is over Zanga son of Sháwarán,  
Whose troops are mighty men. The flag behind  
That hath a moon on red, with musk-black fringes,  
Belongeth to Giv's son Bízhan who spurteth  
Blood to the sky. The flag charged with a tiger—  
One that would make a mighty lion burst,  
And, thou wouldst say, is leaping from its field—  
Is borne by brave Shíddúsh, while that behind him,  
Whose blazon is a wild boar, 'One to bring,'  
As that wouldst say, 'the heavens to the shears,'  
Pertaineth to a brave chief hight Guráza.  
Who counteth it but sport to fight a lion.  
The next flag blazoned with a buffalo,  
With cavaliers behind and chiefs in front,  
Is famed Farhád's, the choicest of the chiefs:  
Thou wouldest say: 'His stature is sky-high.'  
The banner with a wolf for its device  
Betokeneth the valiant chieftain Giv.  
The banner with the lion wrought in gold  
Is floating o'er Gúdarz son of Kishwád.  
The streaming standard blazoned with a pard  
Precedeth proud, imperious Rívníz.  
The banner that is charged with a gazelle

Belongeth to Nastúh son of Gúdarz,  
 And to his troops; that with the mountain-sheep  
 Pertaineth to another son—Bahrám.  
 They all are lion-men—brave cavaliers;  
 To name each one were tedious."

Thus he told

The blazons of the chiefs to prince Farúd,  
 Who viewed all, great and small. His heart grew glad,  
 His cheek flushed,<sup>1</sup> and he spake thus to Tukhár:—  
 "We shall take vengeance for my sire with ease!  
 I will not leave in Chín or in Máchín  
 A cavalier, when battling for revenge,  
 But catch the Dragon<sup>2</sup> and reduce their throne  
 To straits."

Now when the Íránians had descried  
 Farúd upon the mountain with Tukhár,  
 Tús the commander was incensed, and caused  
 The drums and elephants to halt. He said:—  
 "We need an enterprising cavalier  
 To hasten to the mountain-top to learn  
 Who these two warriors are and wherefore there.  
 If they be ours let him bestow on them  
 Two hundred lashes on their heads, if foes  
 Bind them and drag them hither faces downward;  
 If they be slain still let him drag them hither  
 Along the dust and have no fear of any,  
 While if they shall prove spies, who want to take  
 The number of our forces secretly,  
 Let him cleave both asunder on the spot,  
 Then fling them down the mountain and return;  
 But if a countless host be ambushed there,  
 Whereof a straggling few have shown themselves,  
 Let him return and give the intelligence  
 To us forthwith, and we will drive them thence."

V. 803

<sup>1</sup> Reading with P.

<sup>2</sup> Afrásiyáb.

## § 13

*How Bahráṁ came to Farúd upon the Mountain*

Bahráṁ son of Gúdarz said to the chief:—

"This matter shall not be concealed from us.

I will go forth to do as thou hast said,

And scale the mountain-top."

He struck his steed,

And went full of surmise toward the height.

Farúd said to Tukhár: "Who is this man

That cometh hither with such insolence?

Good sooth! he taketh no account of us

At all, but cometh up the steep apace!

He rideth a bay charger with a lasso

Hung in his saddle-straps."

The counsellor

Replied: "He is not one to treat with rudeness.

I know him not by token or by name,

But take him for a kinsman of Gúdarz.

When Kai Khusráu departed from Túrân

He took a helmet of Afrásiyáb's;<sup>1</sup>

It is methinketh on that horseman's head,

And he hath royal mail to correspond.

He must be of the kindred of Gúdarz;

So let us ope our lips and question him."

Bahráṁ, when he came nearer to the crest,

Cried as a cloud might thunder: "Who art thou

Upon the mountain-top? Dost thou not see

'Yon countless host, or hear their clamouring

And din of drums? Or art thou not afraid

Of Tús their watchful leader?"

Then the prince:—

"Thou wast not rudely treated: be not rude.

Good words, O veteran! Let no harsh challenge

Pollute thy lips. Thou art no warlike lion,

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. ii. p. 377.

And I am not a desert-onager;  
 We are not to be treated in this fashion.  
 Thou art in no way my superior  
 In courage or in manliness or strength,  
 While as for head, foot, hand, heart, brain, and wits,  
 Tongue speaking fluently and eyes and ears—  
 See if I too possess them and, if so,  
 Forbear to threaten in thy foolishness.  
 If thou wilt answer I will ask thee somewhat,  
 And shall rejoice if thou advise me well."

Bahrám said: "Ask away! Thou art in heaven  
 And I am on the earth."

"Who is your leader,"

Inquired Farúd, "and wherefore make ye war?"

Bahrám said: "Tús is leader for he hath  
 The drums and Káwa's flag. Of warriors  
 There are Gúdarz, Ruhhám, and Gív, Shídúsh,  
 Gurgín, Farhád the valiant, Gustaham,  
 With Zanga son of Sháwarán, and chief  
 Of all the clan of fighting-men—Guráza."

Farúd returned: "Why nam'st thou not Bahrám,  
 And leavest thus the matter incomplete?"

V. 805

In him of all the offspring of Gúdarz  
 We most rejoice, and yet thou nam'st him not!"

Bahrám replied to him: "O lion-man!  
 Who spake to thee in such wise of Bahrám?"

Farúd said: "From my mother heard I of him.  
 She said to me: 'Now when the host approacheth  
 Meet it and summon forth Bahrám, and also  
 A noble, Zanga son of Sháwarán,  
 Because they are thy father's foster-brothers,  
 And thou mayst well inquire for news of them.'"

Then thus Bahrám: "O fortune's favourite!  
 So thou art Fruit of that Imperial Tree!  
 Thou art Farúd, young prince! Live long and happy!"  
 He answered: "Yea, I am indeed Farúd:

The fallen Cypress hath put forth a Shoot."

Bahrám rejoined: "Display to me thy person,  
Display to me the mark of Siyáwush."<sup>1</sup>

Thereat Farúd showed to Bahrám his arm.

A mole of ambergris on rosy flesh

Was there—a picture such as none on earth

Could skill to limn with compasses from Chín.

Bahrám perceived: "He cometh from Kubád

Through Siyáwush," then blessed him, did obeisance,

And scaled the lofty steep. The prince dismounted,

Sat on a rock, rejoicing, and thus said:—

"Exalted, shrewd, and Lion of the fight!

Were my two eyes to see my sire alive

In sooth it would not be a greater joy

To me than to behold thee glad and happy,

Accomplished, wary, and a paladin.

I came upon this mountain-top to ask

About the heroes of the Íránian host,

And learn who are their chief and men of name.

I will provide a feast such as I can,

Will entertain their paladin with joy,

Give many gifts of horses, maces, belts,

And scimitars, then march forth seared of heart

Before the host against Túrán for vengeance.

The quest befitteth me who am fierce fire

When mounted on my saddle in the combat.

Be pleased to ask the paladin to come

With glad heart to the mountain, there to spend

A week that we may well advise together.

Upon the eighth day, when the tymbal soundeth,

And Tús the general mounteth on his steed,

I will make ready to avenge my father,

And, in the anguish of my heart, provide

A conflict which shall teach the warrior-lion,

V. 806

<sup>1</sup> Similarly Giv desired to see the birth-mark of Kai Khusráu,  
Vol. II. p. 372.

While vultures' feathers testify aloft,  
That 'tis no common noble of the world  
Who girdeth him for vengeance such as this."

Bahrám replied: "O prince young and accomplished,  
And valiant cavalier! I will report  
Thy words to Tús, and kiss his hand while urging  
Compliance. Still our chieftain is not wise,  
His head and brains brook not good counselling.  
He is accomplished, rich, and nobly born,  
But nameth not the Sháh. When Gív brought  
home

That glorious one, Tús was provoked with him,  
Gúdarz, and Gív, supported Fariburz,  
And said: 'I am descended from Naudar:  
The kingship of the world is rightly mine.'  
He very well may disregard my words,  
And in his anger quarrel with myself.  
If any one but I shall come to thee  
Let him not look upon thy head and helmet.  
Tús said to me: 'See who is on the summit,  
But ask him not what he is doing there.  
To talk with sword and mace will be enough,  
For why should any one be there to-day?'  
When he is calm I will return to thee  
With good news and conduct thee to our host,  
Rejoicing; but if any one approach  
Except myself put little faith in him.  
More than a single horseman will not come  
To thee, such is our noble leader's rule.  
Consider well what is the wisest course,  
Take refuge in the hold and quit this spot."

Farúd took from his belt a turquoise mace  
With golden haft. "Accept of this," he said,  
"A keepsake from me; it will prove of service.  
If Tús the general be well-disposed  
We will have merry hearts and great content,

And I will furnish further other things,  
 Steeds, sells, gold, crowns, and royal signet-rings."

## § 14

*How Bahrán went back to Tús*

Bahrám returning said to Tús: "May wisdom  
 And thy pure soul be mates! This is Farúd,  
 The son of guiltless, murdered Siyáwush!  
 He showed to me the mark which all the race  
 Inherit from Káuś and Kai Kubád."

The overbearing general replied:—

V. 808

"The host, the trumpets, and the drums are mine.  
 My words to thee were: 'Bring the man to me,  
 Ask him no questions.' If he be a king  
 Who then am I, and wherefore am I here  
 With this array? A man of Turkman race,  
 Like some black raven on the mountain there,  
 Is hindering the progress of the troops!  
 Among the froward offspring of Gúdarz  
 I can see naught but mischief to the host.  
 Thou wast afraid of one unskilful horseman!  
 It was no savage Lion on the height.  
 He saw our host, and duped thee. Thou hast gone  
 Both up and down for naught!" Then to the chiefs:—  
 "O men of name and slayers of the foe!  
 I need some noble and aspiring man  
 To face the height and Turkman, to behead him,  
 And bring his head to me before the host."

Rívníz girt up his loins for that encounter,  
 Which cost his life. Then said Bahrán to Tús:—  
 "O paladin! stain not thy soul so rashly.  
 Revere the Ruler of the sun and moon:  
 Respect the Sháh, for yonder is his kinsman—  
 A famous horseman and a warrior;

And even if a hundred cavaliers  
Should go against him to the mountain-top  
They would not 'scape his clutches with their lives :  
Thou wilt but bring glad hearts to misery."

V. 809

This angered Tús, who would not be advised,  
But bade some chiefs to hasten to the mountain,  
And many valiant men rushed forth and raised  
Their heads to make an onslaught on Farúd,  
But "Hold not," thus spake brave Bahrán to them,  
"This matter lightly; he on yonder height  
Is of Khusrau's own kin, one hair of whom  
Is better than a hundred paladins.  
He that ne'er saw the face of Siyáwush  
Will find repose in gazing on his son."

Now when Bahrán told of Farúd the men  
That had set forth retraced their steps again.

## § 15

*How Rívníz was slain by Farúd*

Then for the second time the son-in-law  
Of Tús came forth—the laughing-stock of heaven—  
And left the road that leadeth to Charam  
For Mount Sapad, his fierce heart set on outrage.  
Farúd descried him from the mountain-top,  
And, drawing from its case his royal bow,  
Said to Tukhár the veteran: "Tús hath spurned  
The message, for a horseman not Bahrán  
Hath come! My heart is confident but heavy.  
See if thou canst remember who he is.  
Why is he clad in mail from head to foot?"

Tukhár replied: "A valiant cavalier,  
Rívníz by name. He is an only son  
With forty sisters like the jocund spring.  
He is unscrupulous, sly, plausible,

Accomplished, young, and son-in-law to Tús."

Farúd returned: "Such talk is not for war-time.  
If he approach for combat I will send him  
To sleep upon his sisters' skirts. If merely  
Mine arrow make him feel its wind in passing,  
And he surviveth, hold me not a man.  
Which shall mine arrow slay—the horse or rider?  
How sayest thou, O veteran Tukhár?"

V. 810

Tukhár replied: "The time for strife hath come.<sup>1</sup>  
Loose at the man; perchance the heart of Tús  
May be perturbed for him. Tús knoweth not  
Thy resolution for thou soughtest peace;  
If he attacketh thee in wantonness  
He will but bring disgrace upon thy brother."

When sword in hand Rívníz drew nigh, Farúd  
Strung his curved bow, shot down a poplar shaft,  
And pinned the Rúman helmet to the head  
Of him that came. He fell. His fleet steed left him.  
Rívníz came headlong to the dust. When Tús,  
The general, beheld this from Mayam  
The mountain disappeared before his eyes!

Now wisdom hath a saw in this regard:—  
"Man's evil nature is its own reward."

## § 16

*How Zarásp was slain by Farúd*

Then Tús said to Zarásp: "Let thy heart flame  
As 'twere Ázargashasp, don horsemen's armour,  
And take good heed of thine own life and person.  
Thou mayst perchance avenge this noble chief,  
Or if not I myself will seek for vengeance."

Zarásp departed and assumed his helm.  
With vengeful heart and windy pate he went

<sup>1</sup> Inserted from C.

V. 811

Toward Mount Sapad, like some fierce, vengeful lion,  
 And scaled the mountain, with uplifted head,  
 Loud shouts, fierce gestures, and impetuous heart.  
 Farúd, that raging Lion, told Tukhár:—  
 "Another challenger is on his way;  
 See now who this Íránian horseman is  
 That cometh galloping upon the mountain."

Tukhár declared at once: "It is the son  
 Of Tús, by name Zarásp, who wheeleth not  
 His charger from an elephant of war.  
 His sister was the consort of Rivníz.  
 This atheling hath come for vengeance too!  
 As soon as he can see thine arm and casque  
 Let loose a poplar shaft that he may come  
 Down from his charger headlong to the dust.  
 Sure am I that the heart of Tús will be  
 As 'twere a leaf in winter at his death,  
 And that insensate chief will understand  
 That we are not here to be sport for him."

When in the sight of all the Íránian host  
 Zarásp drew near upon the mountain-top,  
 The valorous Farúd urged on his charger,  
 Shot at Zarásp and pinned him through the mail  
 And loins against the saddle. His spirit flamed  
 Upon the point. He fell. His windfoot steed  
 Abandoned him and galloped back full speed.

## § 17

*How Tús fought with Farúd*

A shout ascended from the Íránian host,  
 And all the warriors put on their helms.  
 Tús with a full heart and with weeping eyes  
 Donned his cuirass in haste. He greatly mourned  
 Those gallant chiefs and trembled like a leaf.

He mounted on his saddle and appeared  
 As 'twere the mountain-mass that men up pile  
 Upon the back of lusty elephants,  
 And turned his charger's reins toward Farúd  
 With heart revengeful and with head a-fume.  
 Tukhár the spokesman said : " A Mountain cometh  
 In fury toward the height. 'Tis Tús the chief !  
 Contend not with the veteran Crocodile.  
 Secure thee in the hold and wait on fortune.  
 Expect no merrymake since thou hast slain  
 Alike his son and son-in-law in battle."

V. 812

The young Farúd, wroth with Tuhár, replied :—  
 " When war and strife confront us what care I  
 For Tús or elephant or mighty lion,  
 For warrior-leopard or for tiger ? These  
 But give a man the heart to fight, and serve not  
 To scatter earth upon the raging fire."

Then said Tuhár the much-experienced : " Kings  
 Despise not counsel. Iron though thou be,  
 And able to uproot a mount of flint,  
 Yet art thou but a single cavalier ;  
 And thirty thousand warriors of Írán  
 Will come against thee to the mountain-top.  
 No strong-hold will be left here, stone or dust :  
 They will sweep all away, and furthermore  
 If evil by this means shall come to Tús  
 His downfall will cause sorrow to Khusráu,  
 And so defeat the vengeance for thy sire—  
 A breach which nevermore will be repaired.  
 Why combat with a Lion in thy rage ?  
 Go to the hold and fight not foolishly."

This, which he should have spoken at the first,  
 He left unsaid till then ; so to Farúd  
 All through this worthless, foolish minister  
 Resulted battle and the loss of life.  
 The youth had eighty moon-faced female slaves

V. 813

At home who stood upon the roof to watch him,  
 And babbled ceaselessly. He could not brook  
 The thought of a retreat before their eyes,  
 But raised his reins and rushing on like wind  
 Set to his string another poplar shaft;  
 But first Tukhár said: "If thou meanest fight,  
 The best for thee, or else thou mayest not conquer  
 The noble Tús, will be to overthrow  
 His steed, for monarchs do not war afoot,  
 However much they may be put to it;  
 Besides one wooden arrow from a bow  
 Will never set a period to his life,  
 And when the general shall reach the summit  
 His warriors will follow, and thou hast not  
 The power to oppose; thou hast not looked  
 His arrows in the face."

The youth attended  
 To what Tukhár said, strung his bow, and shot.  
 The poplar arrow struck the general's steed—  
 A bow-shot worthy of a cavalier—  
 The charger came down headlong and expired  
 While Tús both raged and blustered. He returned  
 To camp, his buckler hanging from his neck,  
 On foot, all dusty, and distraught in mind,  
 Farúd the while with gibes pursuing him:—  
 "What ailed the noble paladin, and how  
 Will he proceed amid the ranks of war  
 Who cannot fight a single horseman here?"

The women-slaves began to laugh, and sent  
 Their peals of laughter through the sky. They cried:—  
 "The old man staggereth down the mountain-slope,  
 Affrighted at the arrows of a youth!"

When Tús descended from the height the chiefs,  
 Full of concern, approached him, did obeisance,  
 And said: "O famous paladin of earth!  
 What can be better than thy safe return?"

We have no cause to bathe our cheeks in tears."

The noble Giv was grievously distressed  
Because the valiant general had come back  
Afoot, and said: "This youth exceedeth bounds  
In turning thus our chieftains' faces pale!  
What though he be a king and weareth earrings,  
Is he to flout so great a host as this?  
It is not right that we should acquiesce  
In his pretensions thus. If Tús displayed  
Some hastiness, Farúd hath filled the world  
With tumult. We would die for Siyáwush,  
But we must not forget this injury.  
Farúd hath given to the winds Zarásp,  
That noble cavalier sprung from Naudar!  
The body of Rívnáz is drowned in blood!  
What further shame is ours? Farúd, though he  
Jamshíd's own son, Kubád's own marrow, be,  
Hath made a new departure witlessly."

V. 814

## § 18

*How Giv fought with Farúd*

Giv spake, armed in hot haste, and came forth proudly  
Like wild sheep on the mountain. Seeing him  
Farúd heaved from his breast a chilly sigh,  
And said: "This warrior-host discerneth not  
Between uphill and down! Each combatant  
Is braver than the last—the crown of hosts—  
But wit is lacking in their paladin;  
A witless head is like a soulless body.  
I fear me they will fail in their revenge  
Unless Khusrau himself invade Túrán;  
Then back to back will we avenge our sire,  
And haply get our foes within our clutches.  
Now tell me who this noble horseman is,

V. 815

Whose hand and brand will shortly ask for tears?"

Thereat Tukhár glanced at the plain below,  
 And said to him: "It is the raging Dragon,  
 Whose neezings make birds topple from the air,  
 Who put Pirán thy grandsire's hands in bonds,  
 And brake two Turkman hosts!<sup>1</sup> He hath unfathered  
 Full many a little child. His foot hath been  
 On many a river, mount, and wilderness.  
 Full many a father too hath he unsonned,  
 And treadeth underfoot the lion's neck.  
 'Twas he that bare thy brother to Írán,  
 And crossed Jihún although he saw no boat.<sup>2</sup>  
 They call him Gív—a very Elephant  
 Or river Nile upon the day of battle.  
 When thou shalt set thy thumbstall to the bow-string  
 Thy poplar arrow will not pierce his mail,  
 Because he weareth that of Siyáwush;<sup>3</sup>  
 So draw thy bow and let the arrow fly  
 Against his steed. The great beast may be wounded,  
 And Gív the rider may return afoot  
 With shield on neck as did their general."

The brave prince bent his bow until the top  
 Was at his shoulder, shot, and struck Gív's charger  
 Upon the breast. Gív came down and retreated.  
 Then from the battlements of Mount Sapad  
 A shout rose. Gív's brain shrank before the jeers,  
 But all the mighty men approached him, saying:—  
 "Praise be to God, exalted warrior!  
 Because the horse is hurt and thou art not,  
 Nor art thou captured but can'st go again."

Bízhan the warrior came to Gív like wind,  
 And uttered words most unacceptable:—<sup>4</sup>  
 "My father—lion-quelling paladin,  
 Whose might is greater than an elephant's!

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II. p. 378 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* p. 377.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* p. 392.

<sup>4</sup> Reading with P.

Why did a single horseman see thy back?  
 Thy hand was wont to be the heart of fight,  
 But now because a Turkman shot thy steed  
 Thou wentest reeling like a drunken man!"

Giv answered saying: "Since my horse was wounded  
 I should have forfeited my life to him  
 Immediately."

He spake in savage tones,  
 Which when Bizhan perceived he showed his back,  
 And Giv in fury at his levity  
 Lashed at Bizhan's head with a riding-whip,  
 And said: "Did no one ever teach thee this—  
 That circumspection is required in war?  
 Thou hast no wisdom, providence, or brains,  
 And may he cease to be that nurtured thee."

Bizhan was pained because his sire was wroth,  
 And swore an oath before the Almighty Judge:—  
 "I will not take the saddle off my steed  
 Until I have avenged Zarisp or perished."

Departing with a heart oppressed by care,  
 And head all vengeance, unto Gustaham  
 He spake thus: "Let me have a steed of thine—  
 A handy one, such as will climb with ease  
 The mountain-side—so that I may assume  
 My mail that one of us may seem a man.  
 A Turkman hath ascended to the heights,  
 So as to draw the eyes of all the host,  
 And I desire to go and fight with him  
 Because my soul is darkened by his deeds."

But Gustaham: "This is not well. Climb not  
 The height so rashly! When we have to march  
 The world will be all ups and downs and waste.  
 Now of my horses fit to carry armour  
 I have but two remaining, and if he  
 Destroy one I shall not obtain another  
 To take its place in action, strength, and size.

Zarásp—a world-lord—with Rívníz, and Tús,  
 Who holdeth all the world of no account,  
 And thine own sire, that hunter of fierce lions,  
 Who reckoneth not how heaven's wheel may turn,  
 Have all retreated from him with sore hearts;  
 None made a fight against that Mount of Flint.  
 Would that we had a vulture's wings or eagle's,  
 For none will get inside the hold afoot!"

Bízhan replied to him: "Break not my heart,  
 Break not mine arms and shoulders too just now,  
 For I have sworn a great oath by the moon,  
 The world's Judge, and the Sháh's own diadem,  
 That if I am not slain I will not ride  
 Back from the mountain but avenge Zarásp."

Then Gustaham replied: "This is not good,  
 For wisdom doth not recognise such fierceness."

Bízhan responded: "I will go afoot,  
 And so avenge Zarásp: I need no horse."

Then answered Gustaham: "I would not have  
 A single hair to perish from thy head;  
 And if I had a hundred thousand steeds,  
 Whose manes and tails were full of royal gems,  
 I would not keep them or my treasure, life,  
 Or iron mace or falchion back from thee.  
 Go thou, inspect my horses each in turn,  
 And take whichever of them thou preferrest.  
 Bid that be saddled. If 'tis slain so be it."

He had one charger that was like a wolf,  
 Long in the barrel, tall, and spirited:  
 They mailed it for the brave, young atheling.  
 Gív, mindful of Farúd's deeds, fumed at heart  
 Thereat, then sent and summoned Gustaham,  
 And uttered many a saw concerning youth.  
 He sent Bízhan the mail of Siyáwush,  
 Besides a royal helmet of his own.

When Gustaham had brought the mail Bízhan

Inceased himself as quick as dust and went  
To Mount Sapad as one on vengeance bent.

## § 19

*How Bízhan fought with Farúd*

Farúd said to Tukhár: "Another chief  
Hath come! Look forth, see who he is, and who  
Will weep for him."

That man of words replied:—

"There is not one to match him in Írán,  
For he is Gív's son and a valiant hero  
Victorious like a lion in all combats.  
Gív hath no other son, and this is dearer  
To him than life and wealth. Direct thy hand  
Against the steed, and break not the Sháh's heart.  
Bízhan too hath the mail, and Gív hath linked  
The gorget of the helm, of Siyáwush  
Thereto. These neither double-headed dart  
Nor shaft can pierce. Bízhan may fight afoot.  
Thou wilt not shine as his antagonist;  
He graspeth, look! a sword of adamant."

Farúd's shaft struck the charger of Bízhan:  
Thou wouldst have said: "It had no life." It fell,  
And when Bízhan had disengaged himself  
He made toward the summit, sword in hand,  
And shouted: "O thou valiant cavalier!  
Remain and see now how a Lion fighteth,  
And realise how heroes though unhorsed  
Will still advance to battle with the sword.  
Thou shalt behold it if thou wilt await me,  
For thou shalt never think of fighting more."

Farúd above was angered too because  
Bízhan withdrew not, and again that Lion  
Discharged a shaft. Bízhan the brave held up

His shield above his head, The arrow pierced  
 The shield but missed the mail. Bízhan sped on,  
 And, when he reached the summit, drew his sword.  
 Farúd the noble turned away from him;  
 The ramparts rang with cries. Bízhan pursued  
 Apace, sharp sword in hand, and gashed the bards  
 Upon the noble steed which came to dust.  
 Farúd howbeit gained the castle-gate,  
 The garrison secured it with all speed,  
 And showered many stones down from the walls  
 Upon Bízhan, who knew that 'twas no spot  
 To loiter at. He cried: "O famous one!  
 Hast thou—a warrior and cavalier—  
 Thus turned from one on foot and felt no shame?  
 Woe for the heart and hand of brave Farúd!"

He left the scene of combat, came to Tús,  
 And said: "To fight so brave a warrior  
 Would need a famous lion of the desert,  
 And if a mount of flint should turn to water  
 In strife with him the chieftain need not marvel:  
 Imagination boggleth at such prowess!"

The general Tús swore by the Lord of all:—  
 "I will send up this hold's dust to the sun.  
 To avenge beloved Zarásp the cavalier  
 I will attack without delay, will make  
 This Turkman wretch a corpse, and with his gore  
 Engrain the stones like coral to the core."

### § 20

#### *How Farúd was slain*

Now when the shining sun had disappeared,  
 And dark night led its host across the sky,  
 The daughter of Pírán approached her son—  
 Farúd—with anxious mind and aching heart,

And lay down near her darling, but all night  
 Remained the spouse of grief and misery,  
 She dreamed that from the lofty castle rose  
 A flame in front of him she loved so well,  
 Illuming Mount Sapad and burning all  
 The castle and the women-slaves. She woke  
 In pain, her soul in anguish and dismay,  
 Went out upon the wall and looking round  
 Saw all the mountain filled with mail and spears.  
 Her cheek flushed up and fuming at the heart  
 She hastened to Farúd, and cried to him :—  
 " Awake from slumber, O my son ! the stars  
 Are bringing down disaster on our heads !  
 The mountain is all foes, the castle-gate  
 All spears and mail ! "

He said : " Why such to-do ?

If life is o'er for me, and thou canst count not  
 On further respite for me, mine own sire  
 Was slain in youth, my life is wrecked like his.  
 Gurwf's hand put a period to his days,  
 And now Bizhan is eager for my death ;  
 Yet will I struggle, perish wretchedly,  
 And not ask quarter of the Íráníans."

He gave out mail and maces to the troops,  
 He placed a splendid helm upon his head,  
 And with a Rúman breastplate girt about him  
 Came with a royal bow grasped in his hand.  
 Now when the shining sun displayed its face,  
 And proudly mounted to the vault of heaven,  
 The war-cries of the chieftains rose on all sides,  
 While massive maces whirled amid the din  
 Of clarions, tymbals, pipes, and Indian bells.  
 Farúd descended from the castle-ramparts  
 With all his gallant Turkmans. Through the dust  
 Raised by the horsemen, and the feathered shafts,  
 The mountain-top was like a sea of pitch.

There was no level ground or room to fight ;  
The rocks and stones played havoc with the steeds,  
While shouts ascended as the armies strove.  
Tús ready armed for battle, grasping shield  
And trenchant falchion, led the way in person,  
Escorted by the chieftains of the host  
Afoot. Thus they attacked till noon was high,  
And then the troops of brave Farúd were thinned,  
The hills and valleys had been filled with slain,  
The youth's good fortune had abandoned him.  
The Íránians marvelled at him, none had seen  
So fierce a Lion, but as battle pressed him  
He saw his fortune adverse ; of the Turkmans  
No cavalier remained with him ; he fought  
Alone ; he turned and fled down toward the hold.  
Ruhhám sought with Bízhan to intercept him :  
They charged him from above and from below.  
When on the lower ground Bízhan appeared,  
With stirrups firmly pressed and reins held loose,  
The youth espied the helm, drew out his mace,  
And went like some fierce lion at his foe,  
Not knowing what the vaulted sky decreed.  
He thought to strike Bízhan upon the head,  
And smash both head and helmet with one buffet.  
Bízhan was staggered by the young man's stroke,  
And lost both sense and power. Ruhhám behind  
Saw this and shouted, clutched his Indian sword,  
And struck the lion-man upon the shoulder ;  
His hand fell useless. Wounded he cried out,  
And urged his steed which, as he neared the hold,  
Bízhan came up and houghed. Farúd himself  
Afoot with certain of his followers,  
Thus stricken in the battles of the brave,  
Reached and secured with speed the castle-gate.  
Woe for the heart and name of brave Farúd !  
His mother and the slaves drew near, embraced him,

And sadly laid him on his ivory throne :  
 His day, his season for the crown, were over.  
 His mother and the female slaves plucked out  
 The scented tresses of their musky hair,  
 While the beloved Farúd plucked out their lives :  
 The throne was strewn with hair, the house all  
 sorrow.

Then with a faint glance and a sigh he turned  
 Toward his mother and the slaves, and said,  
 With one last effort to unclothe his lips :—  
 " It is no marvel that ye pluck your hair ;  
 The Íránians will come with girded loins  
 To sack the hold and make my slave-girls captive,  
 Make castle, castle-wall, and rampart waste.  
 Let all whose hearts and cheeks burn for my life  
 Go fling themselves down from the battlements  
 That none may be the portion of Bizhan.  
 I follow soon because he severeth  
 My blameless life and is, in this my day  
 Of youth, my death."

He spake, his cheeks grew wan,  
 His spirit seared away 'mid grief and anguish.

As 'twere a conjurer this drunken sky  
 Deludeth us with tricks—threescore and ten—  
 At whiles employing blast or cloud and then

The sword or dagger or the agency  
 Of some unworthy wight. At whiles to one

Plunged in calamity 'twill grant relief,  
 At whiles allot crown, treasury, and throne,

At whiles chain, dungeon, bitterness, and grief !

Man must accept his lot whate'er it be ;

Mine own affliction is my poverty.

The man of wisdom, had he died at birth,  
 Had suffered not the heat and cold of earth,

But, living after birth, hath want and stress,

Constrained to weep a life of wretchedness.

Woe for his heart, his usance, and intents!  
His pillow is the dust in all events.

## § 21

*How Jaríra slew herself*

V. 824

Now when in failure thus had passed away  
Farúd, the hapless and inglorious son  
Of Siyáwush, the slave-girls sealed the roof,  
And dashed them to the ground. Jaríra kindled  
A pyre and burned the treasures. Sword in hand  
She locked the stable of the Arab steeds,  
Hamstrung, and ripped them up. All blood and  
sweat

She sought the couch of glorious Farúd,  
Upon whose coverlet a dagger lay,  
And, having pressed her cheeks upon his face,  
Ripped up herself and died upon his breast.

The Íránians forced the portal of the hold,  
Prepared for pillaging, but when Bahráim  
Approached those walls his heart was rent with sorrow.  
He sought the couch of glorious Farúd,  
With cheeks all tears and heart a-fume, and thus  
Addressed the Íránians: "Here is one by far  
More wretched and dishonoured than his sire,  
For Siyáwush did not destroy his slaves,  
Nor was his mother slain upon his couch,  
Though round him likewise all his palace flamed,  
And all his home and goods were razed and burned.  
Still heaven's hands are long enough to reach  
The wicked, and it turneth not in love

V. 825

O'er men unjust. Shall ye not shame before  
Khusrau who, charging Tús so earnestly,  
Sent you to take revenge for Siyáwush,  
And gave you much advice and parting-counsel?

When he shall hear about his brother's death  
 He will cut short respect and clemency,  
 And for Ruhlám and passionate Bízhan  
 The world will have but little pleasure left."

With that came Tús the general with the drums  
 Along the road that leadeth to Kalát,  
 While with him were the chiefs Gúdarz and Gív,  
 And therewithal a host of warriors.  
 The general marched along to Mount Sapad,  
 Advancing swiftly and without remorse;  
 But when he reached the throne where wretchedly  
 The poor, slain man lay pillowed with his mother,  
 While on one hand beside the pillow sat,  
 All tears and wrath, Bahrám, and on the other,  
 With all the men of battle crowding round  
 About him, Zanga son of Sháwarán,  
 While tree-like on the ivory throne the hero—  
 A moon in face, a teak in stature, slept—  
 A Siyáwush upon his throne of gold—  
 With coat of mail and helmet, mace and girdle,  
 While Gív, Gúdarz, the other men of name  
 And gallant chiefs, bewailed him bitterly,  
 Then Tús poured out his heart's blood down his cheeks  
 In anguish for Farúd and his own son,  
 While Gív, Gúdarz, and all the warriors  
 With sighs and tears turned and upbraided him :—  
 "Thy fury beareth thee remorse as fruit :  
 Sow not the seeds of fury in the garden.  
 Thus in thy haste and fury hast thou given  
 A youth of Kaian stock with all his Grace,  
 His stature, form, and bearing to the wind,  
 Hast given Zarásp, that chief sprung from Naudar,  
 And given too—that victim of thy rage—  
 Rívníz ! Ill fortune hath left naught undone !  
 But parts and wisdom in the passionate  
 Are like a sword that groweth blunt with rust."

While thus they spake Tús wept; his rage and fury  
Abated; he replied: "From evil fortune  
No lack of toil and moil befalleth man."

He gave directions to his men to build  
Upon the mountain-top a royal charnel  
Wherein they placed a throne of gold, the mail,  
Sword, mace, and girdle, then prepared the corpse,  
Requiring roses, camphor, musk and wine,  
And with the camphor they embalmed his head,  
His body with rose-water, musk, and gums.  
They set him on the throne and left him there;  
That famed, accomplished, lion-hearted man  
Thus passed away. Beside the prince they set  
Rívníz and great Zarásp, while Tús, with beard  
Like camphor, shed a stream of tears of blood.

'Tis always thus! However long we stay  
Proud Elephant and Lion must away!  
The hearts of stone and anvil quake with fear  
Of death; no root and leaf escape it here.

### § 22

*How Tús led the Host to the Kása Rúd, and how  
Paláshán was slain by Bizhan*

V. 827

When Tús the general had made an end  
Of fighting with Farúd, and left the heights,  
He halted at Charain three days. The blare  
Of trumpets rose upon the fourth; then Tús  
Led forth the host and sounded pipe and tymbal,  
While all the earth from mountain unto mountain  
Turned ebon. Whatso Turkman troops he saw  
He slew and flung them down upon the road,  
Left all the marches neither woof nor warp,  
And thus proceeded to the Kása rúd,  
Where he encamped the army: all the earth

Was covered by his tents.

"Troops from Írán  
Are at the Kása rúd!" Such tidings reached  
Túrán, and from the Turkmans there came forth  
Shrewd Paláshán, a youthful warrior,  
The leader of their host, to view the foe,  
And count the camp-enclosures and the flags.  
Within the lines there was a rising ground  
On one side, and unoccupied by troops:  
There Gív was sitting with Bízhan, conversing  
On matters great and small. Appeared the flag  
Of Paláshán, come from the Turkman host,  
Upon the road, whereat the gallant Gív  
Unsheathed his sword. "I will go forth," quoth he,  
"Behead, or bring him captive to our folk."

Bízhan said: "Man of name! the Sháh bestowed  
A robe of honour on me for this end;  
According to his order I must gird  
Myself to fight the warrior Paláshán."

V. 523

"Haste not to battle with this savage Lion,"  
Gív answered. "God forbid that thou shouldst fight  
him,  
And straiten mine own day. A Lion he,  
This desert is his feeding-ground, he preyeth  
On none but warriors."

Bízhan replied:—

"Oh! put me not to shame before the world-lord  
By speaking thus, but let me have the armour  
Of Siyáwush. Be mine to hunt this Leopard."

Then gallant Gív gave him the coat of mail.  
Bízhan, when he had made the buckles fast,  
Bestrode a rapid charger, and rode off  
Upon the desert with a spear in hand.  
Now Paláshán, who had brought down a deer,  
Was roasting some kabáb upon a fire,  
And eating with his bow upon his arm,

V. 831

Of men and cattle perished. None at last  
 Possessed a charger. When the eighth day came  
 The sun prevailed, the earth was like a sea,  
 The troops were mustered, and Tús spake of fight :  
 He said : " The host hath suffered greatly here ;  
 'Tis well that we proceed upon our march.  
 Cursed be these fields and fells, all from Kalát  
 And Mount Sapad down to the Kása rúd ! "

Then from the warrior-throng thus spake Bahrám :—  
 " I needs must tell the general my mind  
 Concerning this. Thou makest us keep silence !  
 Thou fightest with the son of Siyáwush !  
 I told thee : ' Do not so : it is not right.'  
 See what a loss hath followed and what ill  
 May yet confront thee, for the buffalo  
 Is still within its hide ! "

" Ázargashasp  
 Is not more famed than was Zarásp the brave,"  
 Said Tús, " nor was Farúd slain innocent.  
 'Twas written thus, and what hath been hath been.  
 Look through the host and see whom thou canst find  
 In courage and in aspect like Rívníz,  
 Through whom my cup was filled with wine and milk.  
 His form was youthful but his words were sage.  
 Now let us speak no further of the past,  
 Or whether he was justly slain or not ;  
 And since Gív took a present from the Sháh  
 That he might set that mass of faggots blazing,  
 Which now is in the way, 'tis time to do it,  
 And light up heaven with the conflagration ;  
 Thus we may gain a passage for the troops."

Gív said to him : " This will not be a toil,  
 Or, if it be, a toil not unrequited."

Bízhan was grieved : " I cannot give," he said,  
 " Consent to this. Thou rearedst me in stress  
 And hardihood, without a chiding word :

It must not be that I a youth sit still,  
While thou an old man girdest up thy loins."

Giv said: "My son! I took this enterprise  
Upon my shoulders; 'tis the time for arms,  
Not for indulgence and decrepitude.  
Be not in dudgeon at my going, I  
Can burn a flinty mountain with my breath."

He passed the Kása rúd albeit with stress,  
The world for warp and woof had ice and snow,  
And when he reached the barricade of faggots  
Its length and breadth were more than he could tell;  
He used a javelin-point to kindle fire,  
Threw it upon the mass and burned the pile.  
For three weeks conflagration, wind, and smoke  
Allowed no passage through the burning mass,  
But when the fourth week came the army went  
Across the river for the fire was spent.

## § 24

*How Bahrán captured Kabúda*

Tús, when the host was mustered, left the fire  
For Giravgard. They marched in fair array,  
Camped on the hills and plains, took due precautions,  
And hurried out the scouts on every side.

Tazháv the cavalier—one used to fight  
With lions—dwelt at Giravgard and kept  
The herds there, driving them from hill to hill.  
News came: "A host hath come forth from Írán:  
The cattle must be driven out of reach."

He sent a warrior with all dispatch  
To tell a herdsman of Afrásiyáb's—  
Kabúda hight, an able man withal,  
And there was need for his ability:—  
"Depart at dark and keep thyself unseen;

Observe how large the Íránian army is,  
And see whose are the standards and the crowns.  
My purpose is to make a night-attack,  
And fill the mountains and the plains with blood."

When it was dark Kabúda drew anigh,  
Like some black dív, the army of Írán.  
That night Bahrám, whose lasso snared the heads  
Of elephants, was on the outpost-guard,  
And, when Kabúda's charger neighed, Bahrám  
Pricked up his ears, sat firm, and strung his bow;  
Then urged his mighty charger from the spot.  
Without a word he let an arrow fly,  
Though darkness hid Kabúda from his sight,  
And struck the royal herdsman on the belt;  
His face turned black; and falling from his steed  
He begged for life. Bahrám said: "Tell me truly:  
Who sent thee hither? Whom wouldst thou attack?"

Kabúda said: "If thou wilt grant me quarter  
I will reply to all thy questioning:  
My master is Tazháv. I am his servant,  
And sent by him; so put me not to death,  
And I will guide thee to his dwelling-place."

Bahrám replied: "Know that Tazháv to me  
Is as a bullock to a rending lion."

He cut Kabúda's head off with a dagger,  
Secured it to his royal saddle-straps,  
Took it to camp and flung it down in scorn  
As that of one unfamed, no cavalier  
To fight.

The voice of chanticleer and lark  
Arose, and yet Kabúda came not back:  
Tazháv the warrior was sad at heart,  
Aware that evil had befallen him;  
Then summoned all the troops that were about  
Available, and promptly led them out.

## § 25

*How the Íránians fought with Tazháw*

Now when the sun had set up on the plain  
 Its standard, and its sword had turned the rear  
 Of night to violet, Tazháw the chieftain  
 Led forth his men. Shouts from the look-out reached  
 The Íránians: "From Túrán a host hath come  
 To fight. Their leader is a Crocodile  
 With flag in hand."

V. 834

Then from the nobles Gív  
 Went forth to him, escorted by a troop  
 Of valiant warriors, fiercely asked his name,  
 And said: "O lover of the fray! hast come  
 With such a force as this to meet the claws  
 Of Crocodiles?"

The bold Tazháw replied:—  
 "A lusty heart and lion's claws are mine.  
 Tazháw am I, I fling down men and pluck  
 The heads of valiant Lions from their trunks.  
 By birth and worth I am Íránian,  
 Sprung from the warriors and the Lions' seed.  
 Now I am marchlord of the country round—  
 A chosen chief, the king's own son-in-law."

Gív said: "Nay say not so, 'twill dim thy glory.  
 Would any leave Írán and settle here  
 Unless he lived on blood or eclocynth?  
 If thou art marchlord and king's son-in-law  
 How is it that thou hast not mightier powers?  
 With such a band as this seek not the fray,  
 Nor go with vehemence against the brave;  
 For I who speak—a hero worshipful  
 And famous—trample on the heads of marchlords.  
 If thou with all thy troops wilt do my bidding,  
 And hence depart Íránward to the Sháh,

Go first of all to Tús our general,  
 Apply to him, and hearken to his words.  
 I will take care that thou shalt have a gift  
 From him—goods, slaves, and steeds caparisoned.  
 This seemeth well to me, O prudent man !  
 What say'st thou ? Shall I have to fight to-day ? ”

v. 835

Tazháv the traitor said : “ O gallant one !  
 None lowereth my flag. Now I have here  
 The throne and signet, horses, flocks, and soldiers ;  
 Moreover in Írán no person dreameth  
 Of such a king as is Afrásiyáb.  
 Slaves too have I, and herds of wind-foot steeds,  
 Which wander over mountain, vale, and plain.  
 Look not upon my little band but me,  
 And at the mace upon my saddle-bow,  
 For I will maul thy troops to-day till thou  
 Repent thy coming.”

Then Bízhan exclaimed :—

“ O famous chief—engrosser of the fight,  
 Exalted and shrewd-hearted paladin !  
 In age thou art not as thou wast in youth.  
 Why givest thou this counsel to Tazháv ?  
 Why so much love and amity for him ?  
 Our business is to draw the sword and mace,  
 And to cut out these peoples' hearts and brains.”

He urged his steed ; the battle-cry went up ;  
 They laid upon their shoulders sword and mace.  
 A cloud of murky dust rose in the midst  
 So that the sun became invisible,  
 The world grew gloomy as a winter's cloud,  
 And men beheld not shining star or moon.  
 Bold Gív who used to rob the sky of lustre  
 Was in the midst, Bízhan the deft of hand,  
 Who dallied not in action, led the van.  
 Tazháv, who wont to fight the rending lion,  
 And wore his crown, opposed them with Arzhang

To help him and Mardwí the Lion—two  
 That wearied not of fight yet gat small fruit  
 That day, for brave Arzhang withdrew himself,  
 The more part of the Turkman troops were slain,  
 And froward fortune turned its head away.  
 Tazháv the valiant fled. That famous Lion,  
 Bízhan, pursued him, shouting eagerly,  
 And with a spear in hand. Thou wouldst have said :— V. 836  
 "It is a maddened, roaring elephant!"  
 One spear-blow struck Tazháv upon the waist,  
 And all his lustihood departed from him.  
 The man reeled, but the Rúman coat of mail  
 Gave not, nor did the fastenings of it break.  
 Bízhan flung down his spear and made a clutch,  
 Like leopard springing at a mountain-sheep,  
 And then, as falcon bindeth lark, snatched off  
 That crown of great price which Afrisiyáb  
 Had set upon his head, a crown that never  
 Was absent from his thoughts and from his dreams.  
 He urged his steed toward the castle-gate,  
 Pursued thus by Bízhan at lightning-speed,  
 And, when he neared the castle, Ispanwí  
 Came wailing with her face suffused with tears,  
 And cried out loudly to him: "O Tazháv!  
 Where are thy host, thy mettle, and thy might  
 That thou shouldst turn thy back upon me thus,  
 And leave me in this castle shamefully?  
 Give me a seat behind thee; let me not  
 Be left inside the castle for the foe."

The heart of proud Tazháv was set on fire,  
 And his cheeks flamed. She mounted swift as wind  
 Behind him on his steed and clasped his waist.  
 He rushed along like dust with Ispanwí;  
 They made toward Túrán. The charger sped  
 Awhile till man and beast were both fordone,  
 And then Tazháv addressed his handmaid, saying :—

"O my fair mate! here is a grievous case!  
 My charger is exhausted with this work,  
 Foes are behind, in front is a ravine,  
 And though we race Bízhan some distance yet  
 Still they will have their will of us at last;  
 So as they are not enemies to thee  
 Remain behind while I urge on my horse."

Then Ispanwí alighted from the steed:  
 Tazháv's face was all tears at losing her,  
 Yet sped he on to reach Afrásiyáb,  
 And all the while Bízhan was in pursuit,  
 Who when he spied the moon-faced Ispanwí,  
 Her musky hair descending to her feet,  
 Came to her, took her with all gentleness,  
 Made room for her behind him, and returned  
 Toward the army of the paladin.  
 He reached the entrance of the tent of Tús,  
 Rejoicing, whence arose the sound of drums,  
 Because Bízhan, that horseman brave and wary,  
 Was coming with his quarry from the fight.  
 Tús and the chiefs—those lovers of the fray—  
 Then set themselves to pillaging the hold,  
 And afterward they went to seek the herds  
 That roamed about the desert of Túrán.  
 They took, as warriors are wont, their lassos,  
 And quickly furnished all the host with steeds,  
 While in the palace whence Tazháv had fled  
 Were fierce Írinian horsemen lodged instead.

## § 26

*How Afrásiyáb had Tidings of Tús and his Host*

v. 838 Now when Tazháv with wet eyes and in dudgeon  
 Came to the presence of Afrásiyáb  
 He spake thus: "Tús the general arrived,

And brought a host with trump and kettledrum,  
 While as for Paláshán and other nobles,  
 Their heads were brought down to the dust in anguish.  
 The foeman fired the marches and the fields,  
 Destroying all the herds."

Afrásiyáb

Was grieved thereat and sought a remedy.  
 He spake thus to Pírán the son of Wísa:—  
 "I bade thee: 'Gather troops from every side,'  
 But thou hast loitered through old age or sloth,  
 Or disaffection; many of our kin  
 Are slain, and watchful fortune's face is from us;  
 But now we may not tarry, for the world  
 Hath grown strait even to the vigilant!"

Then all in haste Pírán the general  
 Went from the presence of Afrásiyáb,  
 Called up the troops from all the provinces,  
 Served arms out, paid the soldiers, and marched forth.  
 The frontier passed he gave each man his post,  
 The right wing to Bármán and to Tazháv—  
 Two cavaliers whose strength was that of lions—  
 The left wing to the valiant Nastíhan—  
 One in whose clutches lions were as lambs.  
 The world was filled with blast of clarions,  
 And clang of cymbals and of Indian bells,  
 Air was a blaze of or, gules, and purple  
 With all the spears and divers-coloured flags,  
 While what with troops, steeds, elephants, and camels  
 There was no passage left 'twixt sea and sea.  
 Pírán went forth in haste. Afrásiyáb  
 Departed from his palace to the plains,  
 And numbered all the army man by man  
 To see how many noble warriors  
 There were. He made the total five score thousand—  
 All lion-men and wielders of the sword—  
 Then bright and glad oft blessed Pírán, and said:—

"Thou settest forth with joy to victory:  
Ne'er may thine eye behold the bale of time."

The army marched along troop after troop,  
No plain was visible or sea or height;  
Pírán commanded: "Quit the accustomed route,  
Take the short road; the foeman must not hear  
Of these my noble and illustrious troops,  
So may I bring this great host like a mountain  
Down unawares upon yon army's head."

He sent intelligencers out forthwith,  
And shrewdly sought to learn how matters stood;  
Then, stubbornly proceeding on his march,  
Advanced toward Giravgard prepared for battle.  
The chiefs reported what the spies announced:—  
"Tús the commander tarrieth where he was:  
No sound of drums hath risen from the troops,  
For all of them are drinking themselves drunk,  
And wine is in their hands both day and night.  
He hath no mounted outpost on the road,  
Not recking of the army of Túrán."

Pírán, when he had heard this, called the chiefs,  
Spake unto them at large about the foe,  
And said thus: "Never in the fight have we  
Held such a vantage o'er the enemy!"

### § 27

#### *How Pírán made a Night-attack on the Iránians*

Out of that noble host Pírán made choice  
Of thirty thousand horse with scimitars,  
Who marched at dead of night; no tymbal sounded,  
No trumpet blared, none raised the battle-cry.  
Now when the wary chief led forth his troops  
Seven leagues remained betwixt them and the foe,  
And first they came upon the Iránians' herds

At large upon the desert of Túrán,  
 Took many beasts and bore them off withal—  
 Mishap unparalleled! The overseers  
 And herdsmen were all slain, the Íránians' fortune  
 Had grown averse. Thence like a murky cloud  
 The Turkmans marched upon the Íránian host—  
 All drunken and disposed in groups unarmed;  
 Howbeit Gív was in his tent alert,  
 Gúdarz the chieftain sober. Then arose  
 The war-cry with the crash of battle-axes,  
 And Gív—that fight-engrosser—was astound.  
 There stood in front of his pavilion  
 A steed caparisoned in battle-gear.  
 The gallant hero lion-like arrayed  
 His body in the mail of Siyáwush,  
 And, raging like a leopard at himself  
 In shame for his own indolence and sloth,  
 "Up! Up!" quoth he. "How is it that to-night  
 My brain is filled with fumes instead of war?"  
 Then having mounted rushed forth like a blast.  
 He saw the heaven dark with night and dust,  
 And entering the chief's pavilion  
 Exclaimed: "Up! Up! The enemy hath come  
 While we—the warriors of the Sháh—are sleeping!"

Departing thence he visited his sire,  
 An ox-head mace in hand. As quick as smoke  
 He went about the host, awoke the sober,  
 And chode Bízhan: "Is this the place for wine  
 Or fighting?"

The Íránians were hemmed in,  
 The war-cry rose, the tumult dazed the drunken,  
 A cloud ascended and its rain was arrows.  
 Soft pillows were beneath the drunkards' heads,  
 Above were sword, hot mace, and scimitar.

Now when dawn showed forth from the Sign of Leo,  
 And gallant Gív surveyed the host, he saw

The waste all covered with Íránian slain,  
 And watchful fortune's head averse from them.  
 Gúdarz too looked about on every side;  
 The foemen's number grew continually;  
 Against the little force there ranged itself  
 A host like ants and locusts. Tús too looked,  
 And saw no fighting-men save Giv, Gúdarz,  
 And other cavaliers all sore bestead.<sup>1</sup>

V. 842

The flags were rent, the kettledrums o'erturned,  
 And the survivors' cheeks like ebony,  
 For sires had lost their sons and sons their sires,  
 And that great host was utterly o'erthrown,  
 Since so the swiftly circling vault, which now  
 Affordeth pleasure and now pain, decreed.  
 Unable to resist they turned their backs,  
 Abandoning their camp in their confusion,  
 Disorganised, without their drums and baggage,  
 And sorely stricken both on left and right.  
 On this wise fared they toward the Kása rúd—  
 A strengthless mob. With vengeful souls and tongues  
 All jeers the Turkman horsemen followed Tús,  
 And thou hadst said that maces from the clouds  
 Rained in the rear on hauberk, helm, and mail.  
 None made a stand, the warriors took refuge  
 Among the mountains, foundered like their steeds,  
 And had no spirit, strength, or staying power.

Now at the heights the Turkman host turned back,  
 Exhausted by the fight and long pursuit,  
 And Tús no farther feared the foe's assault.  
 The Íránian troops bewailed their many lost,  
 Who if they lived were wounded or in bonds—  
 Alike a cause for tears. No crown or throne  
 Remained, no tent, no steed, no warrior;  
 The land was barren and provided nothing,  
 While nobody went forth to seek the wounded.

<sup>1</sup> Inserted from C.

The son bewailed the father bitterly,  
 And burned in anguish for the suffering.  
 The use and custom of the world is this :  
 To keep back from thee what its purpose is.  
 Its juggling tricks behind a veil are done,

V. 843

It acteth harshly and capriciously,  
 While in greed's grip we travail long, and none  
 Can tell appearance from reality.

From wind thou comest and to dust wilt go :  
 What 'They' <sup>1</sup> will do to thee how canst thou know ?

The more part of the Íránian troops were slain,  
 The rest had come back wounded ; at their beds  
 No leeches were, but grief and tears of blood.  
 Tús battle-maddened was beside himself,  
 So to Gúdarz the hoary veteran,  
 Deprived of child and grandchild, home and land,<sup>2</sup>  
 There came the other veteran warriors  
 With broken hearts to seek his leadership.  
 He placed a watchman on a mountain-top  
 To keep his eyes intently on the foe,<sup>3</sup>  
 While outposts went their rounds on every side  
 To find perchance a cure for this distress.  
 He bade a noble of the Íránians  
 To girdle up his loins to give the Sháh  
 The news of what the captain of the host  
 Had done, and how, by their ill day opprest,  
 They had small profit from their vengeance-quest.

<sup>1</sup> The Powers supreme that be.

<sup>2</sup> With regard to the first part of this line, the loss of Gúdarz' sons and grandsons properly seems to belong to the subsequent battle (p. 89) ; the last part seems more applicable to the historical than to the legendary Gúdarz.

<sup>3</sup> "Il plaça sur la montagne une sentinelle pour observer la route d'Anbouh" (Mohl).

## § 28

*How Kai Khusrau recalled Tús*

V. 844

The courier carried to the Sháh the tidings  
 Of that eclipse of fortune. Brave Khusrau  
 Was troubled when he heard, his bosom throbbed  
 With grief. To anguish at his brother's case  
 Was added anguish on the troops' account.  
 That night he uttered malisons on Tús  
 Till cock-crow. Summoning a prudent scribe,  
 And pouring out the fulness of his heart,  
 He wrote a letter in a wrathful strain,  
 With eyes all tears in mourning for his brother,  
 To Fariburz the son of Sháh Káuś—  
 A letter for the chieftains of the host.  
 First in the letter came the praise of Him,  
 Who made both earth and time, thus: "In the name  
 Of Him Who is the Lord of sun and moon,  
 And giveth power alike to good and bad!  
 From Him come triumph and defeat, from Him  
 Both good and bad get might and their desire.  
 He fashioned the world and place and time,  
 He fashioned ant's foot and massy mountain,  
 And hath bestowed life, lustihood, and wisdom,  
 High throne and majesty and diadem.  
 No man can free himself from that control;  
 The lot of one is Grace and throne, another's  
 Misfortune, want, grief, suffering, and hardship;  
 Yet see I that All-holy God is just  
 In everything, from yonder shining sun  
 To darksome dust.

Tús with the flag of Káwa,  
 And forty warriors wearing golden boots,  
 I sent out with a host against Túrán,  
 And, first fruit of revenge, my brother perished!

Let not Irán have such another chief!  
Let not the host have such another leader!  
Alas! Alas! my brother, young Farúd—  
The head of nobles and the stay of heroes!  
I was in tears of anguish for my sire,  
A long while was I burning in that sorrow,  
And now my brother is the cause of tears!  
I know not who are friends and who are foes.  
'Go not,' I said to Tús, 'toward Charam;  
Breathe not upon Kalát or Mount Sapad,  
Because Farúd is with his mother there.  
He is a warrior of royal race;  
He knoweth not this army whence it is,  
And if they be Íránian troops or what;  
He will come forth to stop the way and stake  
His head upon the issue of a fight.'  
Alas! that warrior of royal birth  
Whom wretched Tús hath given to the wind!  
If he had been commander heretofore  
It had been evil hap for Sháh Káuś,  
And furthermore he slumbereth in battle,  
And only rouseth to sit down to drink.  
There is no prowess in his neighbourhood,  
And may a soul so darkened cease to be!  
When thou shalt read this letter stir thyself;  
Put far away from thee food, rest, and sleep;  
Send Tús back with all speed, observe mine orders,  
And heed not other counsels. Thou art chief,  
The captain of the host; 'tis thine to wear  
The golden boots and hold the flag of Káwa.  
Illustrious Gúdarz will counsel thee  
In all; haste not to fight, keep far from wine,  
Abstain from slumber, seek not at the first  
To fight through anger, tarry as thou art  
Until the wounded are restored to health;  
Then Gfv will lead thy van for he possesseth

Grace, stature, and the clutches of a leopard;  
 Bring from all sides material for the war,  
 And God forbend thou think of banqueting!"

They sealed this letter with the Sháh's own signet,  
 Who thus enjoined the messenger: "Depart  
 Upon the road; repose not night or day,  
 And take another horse at every stage."

So sped the messenger until he came  
 To Fariburz and gave him the dispatch,  
 Who summoned Tús and Gíy and all the chiefs,  
 Spake of the past, read the Sháh's letter to them,  
 And then a new Tree fruited in the world.  
 The nobles and the Lions of Írán  
 All called a blessing down upon the Sháh,  
 The leader Tús gave up the royal standard,  
 The drums, the elephants, and golden boots  
 To Fariburz, and said to him: "They come  
 As worthy comrades to a worthy man.  
 May fortune always give thee victory,  
 Be every day of thine a New Year's Day."

Then Tús took all the kindred of Naudar,  
 Those warlike cavaliers and their command,  
 And making no delay upon the road  
 Came from the field of battle to the Sháh,  
 And kissed the ground before him, while Khusrau  
 Vouchsafed not so much as to look at him,  
 And only spake to utter malisons,  
 Disgraced Tús in the presence of the court,  
 And said at last: "Thou man of evil mark!  
 Let thy name cease among the illustrious.  
 Dost thou not fear the holy Lord of earth?  
 Hast thou no awe or reverence for heroes?  
 I gave to thee a royal helm and girdle,  
 And sent thee forth to fight against the foe.  
 Did not I say: 'Go not toward Charam'?  
 Yet didst thou go and give my heart to sorrow,

Didst first of all take vengeance on myself,  
 And minishedst the race of Siyáwush!  
 My noble brother—brave Farúd—whose peer  
 The age had not thou slowest, and to fight  
 With him 'twould need a host of men like thee!  
 Thereafter when thou wentest to the fray  
 Thou wast absorbed in minstrelsy and feasting!  
 Thou hast no place among the throng of men,  
 The things for thee are chains and straps and madhouse;  
 Nor hast thou business with the men of rank,  
 Because thou hast no wise considerance.  
 Thy white beard and descent from Minúchehr  
 Have given thee hope of life; else had I bidden  
 One of thine enemies to be thy headsman.  
 Go! Let a prison be thy home henceforth,  
 And let thine evil nature be thy jailor."

V. 847

He drave Tús out, put him in bonds, and tore  
 The root of gladness from his bosom's core.

## § 29

*How Fariburz asked a Truce of Pírán*

So Fariburz, since he was paladin  
 As well as prince, assumed the casque and bade  
 Ruhhám display his name and native worth  
 By going from the mountain to Pírán  
 To treat with him: "Go to Pírán," he said,  
 "Convey to him a friendly embassage,  
 And say: 'The process of the turning sky  
 Hath been fraught ever thus with hate and love:  
 It lifteth one to heaven on high, another  
 It maketh vile, sad, and calamitous,  
 Him specially that seeketh warriors' hurt.  
 Now night-attacks are not the wont of heroes  
 And mighty men that brandish massive maces.

V. 848

If thou wilt cease from arms we too will cease;  
 If thou preferrest war then we will fight,  
 But let there be a one month's armistice  
 In order that the wounded may recruit.' "

The brave Ruhhám went out from Farfburz,  
 And took with him the message and the letter.  
 He went his way, the Turkman outposts saw him,  
 And asked him who he was and whence he came.  
 Ruhhám replied: "A warrior am I,  
 A man of prowess, weight, and watchfulness—  
 The bearer of a message to Pírán  
 From Farfburz the son of Sháh Káús."

A horseman of the outpost went like dust  
 To tell the tidings, and thus spake: "Ruhhám,  
 Son of Gúdarz, hath come to see the chief."

Pírán commanded him to be brought in,  
 And treated with all honour and respect.  
 The eloquent Ruhhám approached in dread  
 Of what the foe might purpose, but Pírán,  
 On seeing him, received him graciously,  
 And placed him on the throne. Ruhhám then told  
 His business, and Pírán said: "'Tis no trifle;  
 Ye stirred up strife; we marked no sloth in Tú;—  
 He crossed the border like a savage wolf,  
 And slaughtered great and small remorselessly.  
 What multitudes he slew or carried off!  
 Our country's weal and woe were one to him.  
 Still now, although they took us unaware,  
 The Íránians are repaid for their ill deeds;  
 So if thou art the captain of the host  
 Demand of me according as thou needest.  
 If thou wilt have a month of armistice  
 None of our horsemen shall go forth to fight.  
 If thou wilt fight I too am fain for war;  
 Prepare and set the battle in array.  
 If ye will use the month that we accord

V. 849

In marching from the frontiers of Túrán,  
 And in a swift retreat to your own borders,  
 Ye will behold your reputation saved;  
 But if not we will close with you in fight;  
 Ask not for any armistice henceforth."

He gave a robe of honour to Ruhhám,  
 One suited to a man of his repute,  
 And brave Ruhhám conveyed to Fariburz  
 A letter like the one that he had brought.  
 When Fariburz had gained a month's delay  
 He clutched in all directions like a lion.  
 They loosed the fastenings of the money-bags,  
 They gathered bows and lassos from all sides;  
 They went about, reorganised the host,  
 And partially regained what had been lost.

## § 30

*How the Iránians were defeated by the Turkmans*

When with the ending of the month came war,  
 For they observed their compact honourably,  
 The soldiers' shouts went up on every side,  
 And all set forward to the battlefield;  
 The din of trumpet, drum, and bell shook heaven,  
 While what with chargers' crests, reins, hands, and  
     swords,  
 Bows, battle-axes, lances, maces, bucklers,  
 And lassos, gnats could find no way. "The world,"  
 Thou wouldst have said, "is in the Dragon's maw,  
 Or heaven level with earth!"

V. 850

Upon the right  
 Was Giv son of Gúdarz, an archimage  
 And marchlord, on the left the skilled Ashkash,  
 Who shed blood in a river when he fought;  
 Before the standard at the army's centre

Was Fariburz, the son of Sháh Káuś,  
 With men of battle. He harangued his troops,  
 And said: "Till now our prowess hath been hidden,  
 But we will fight to-day as lions fight,  
 And make the world too narrow for our foes;  
 Else will our maces and our Rúman casques  
 Laugh at the host for this disgrace for ever."

They made a heavy rain of arrows fall  
 Like autumn tempests beating on a tree.  
 For arrows and the dust of shouting troops  
 No bird had room to fly, the falchions shone  
 Like diamonds and flamed amid the dust.  
 Thou wouldst have said: "Earth is a negro's face;  
 The stars are warriors' hearts." The multitudes  
 Of maces, spears, and trenchant scimitars  
 Brought Doomsday on the world. Gív from the centre  
 Advanced with lips a-foam and raised his war-cry.  
 He with the noble kinsmen of Gúdarz,  
 With whom the issue lay for good or ill,  
 Stroved with their spears and arrows, showering sparks  
 From steel. Gúdarz fought fiercely with Pírán,  
 And slew nine hundred of his kin. Lahhák  
 And Farshíward saw how their mighty host  
 Was going up in dust and charged on Gív,  
 Upon his mace-men and his valiant troops.  
 Shafts fell in showers from the chieftains' bows  
 Upon those famous warriors clad in mail  
 Till none could see the surface of the ground,  
 Earth was so hidden by the mass of slain,  
 While no man turned his back upon another  
 Or left his post. At length Húmán spake thus  
 To Farshíward: "We must attack the centre,  
 And, routing Fariburz, deprive the host  
 Of his support; it will be easy then  
 To beat the right wing and to seize the baggage."  
 They fell upon the centre, Fariburz

Fled from Húmán, the fighting line was broken,  
 The haughty chiefs gave way, each took his course,  
 Not one Íránian warrior stood his ground.  
 They saw the drums and standard in position  
 No more, and so with eyes bedimmed with fighting  
 They turned their backs upon the enemy,  
 And in that action only grasped the wind.  
 The tymbals, spears, and standard were o'erthrown,  
 Men could not tell the stirrup from the rein,  
 For they had lost all stomach for the fight;  
 The mountains and the plains were drenched with blood.

V. 852

Then Fariburz, as foes were gathering  
 On every side, made for the mountain-skirt  
 With those Íránians whose life was whole,  
 Although for such a life one needs must weep.  
 Gúdarz and Giv with many warriors  
 Of fame among the troops still held their own;  
 But when Gúdarz observed the centre bare,  
 No flag of Fariburz, no chiefs or troops,  
 He turned with heart afire as if to flee:  
 'Twas Doomsday for the kindred of Gúdarz.  
 Giv said to him: "O ancient general:  
 Much hast thou seen of mace, and sparth, and arrow,  
 And if thy purpose is to flee Pírán  
 I needs must scatter dust upon my head.  
 Of chieftains and of veteran warriors  
 There will remain not one alive on earth.  
 For thee and me there is no cure for dying.  
 Death is the very last calamity,  
 And, since our ruggéd hour hath come upon us,  
 The foe should see thy face and not thy back.  
 I will not quit my post, let us not shame  
 Thy father's dust. Hast thou heard never then  
 This ancient saying from some man of lore:—  
 'When buttressed back to back two brethren stand  
 A mountain-mass is but as dust in hand'?

Thou art alive with seventy valiant sons,  
 And thou hast many Elephants and Lions  
 Among thy kindred. Break we with our swords  
 The foe's heart and uproot him though a Mountain."

Gúdarz, when he had heard the words of Gíy,  
 And marked the helmed heads of his warrior-kin,  
 Repented of his cautious rede and took  
 A firmer stand. Guráza, Gustaham,  
 With Barta and brave Zanga came to them,  
 And made a compact by a binding oath:—

v. 853

"Though maces stream with blood we will not quit  
 This field, but, back to back, strive to retrieve  
 Our honour lost."

They took their stand and plied  
 The mace. Full many a noble foe was slain,  
 But fortune favoured not the Íránians.  
 Then old Gúdarz said to Bízhan: "Depart  
 Hence quickly, take with thee thy mace, and arrows,  
 Direct thy horse's reins toward Fariburz,  
 And bring me Káwa's standard. It may be  
 That Fariburz will come with it himself,  
 And flush the face of earth with violet."

Bízhan on hearing this urged on his steed,  
 Came like Ázargashasp to Fariburz,  
 And said to him: "Why art thou hiding here?  
 Employ thy reins as warriors use to do,  
 And stay no longer on the mountain-top;  
 But if thou wilt not come entrust to me  
 The flag and horsemen with their blue steel swords."

But Fariburz, no mate for wisdom then,  
 Cried out: "Away! Thou art in action rash  
 And new to war. The Sháh gave me the standard,  
 The host, crown, throne, and leadership. This flag  
 Becometh not Bízhan the son of Gíy,  
 Or any other warrior in the world."

Bízhan laid hand upon his blue steel sword,

Struck at the standard, clove it in the midst,  
 Seized half thereof and, rushing from the throng,  
 Made off to bear the banner to the host.  
 Now, when the 'Turkmans saw it on the way,  
 A band of lion-hearted warriors  
 Went toward Bízhan and drew their iron sparths,  
 And blue steel swords, to fight for Káwa's standard.  
 Then spake Húmán: "Yon is the violet flag  
 Wherein is all the virtue of Írán;  
 If we can take it we shall make the world  
 Strait to the Sháh."

V. 854

Bízhan strung up his bow  
 As quick as dust, discharged a shower of arrows  
 Upon his foes, and, as he drove them back,  
 Prepared a banquet for the ravening wolf.  
 The cavaliers hard by said unto Gív  
 And Gustaham: "The Turkmans are retreating;  
 Perchance Bízhan is coming with the standard."  
 The brave chiefs of the Íránian host advancing  
 With massive maces slew the Turkman horse  
 In numbers. Famed Bízhan arrived apace,  
 And thence the chieftains held the ground for him  
 Up to the host. Like lion fierce he came  
 With Káwa's flag, the soldiers gathered round it,  
 And air grew violet-dim with horsemen's dust.  
 Once more the Íránian host advanced to fight,  
 And in the foremost rank Rívníz was slain,  
 Who was as dear as life to Kai Káuś,  
 A younger son, a prince who wore a crown,  
 Beloved by Faríburz. When that head fell  
 Full many a noble hero rent his clothes,  
 And Gív exclaimed: "Chiefs, valiant warriors!  
 Upon this field of battle Faríburz,  
 The son of Sháh Káuś, esteemed Rívníz  
 Above all else. The grandson and the son  
 Of old Káuś—Farúd the son of Siyáwush

V. 855

And now Rívníz—have perished all in vain!  
 What greater wonder hath the world in store?  
 We must not let his crown fall to the foe  
 Amid the ranks of war, for that would be  
 Disgrace upon disgrace through it and through  
 The slaughter of Rívníz."

Now brave Pírán,

The noble chieftain, heard the words of Gív,  
 And o'er that crown the battle rose afresh.  
 On both sides many fell and fortune quitted  
 The Íránians, yet Bahrám the warrior  
 Charged lion-like the foe and carried off  
 The crown upon his spear-point, while both hosts  
 Stood wondering, the Íránians full of joy  
 At rescuing that crown so late assumed.  
 The combat waxed more fierce, none turned aside,  
 They raged and smote each other on the head  
 Until the day grew dark, and eyes were baffled.  
 Eight of the kinsmen of Gúdarz survived;  
 The rest had fallen on the battlefield.<sup>1</sup>  
 Of Gív's seed there had perished five and twenty—  
 Men who were fit for diadem and treasure—  
 With seventy of the offspring of Káuś,  
 All cavaliers and Lions in the fight,  
 Besides Rívníz that crowned warrior,  
 No unit merely in the reckoning.  
 Nine hundred horsemen, kinsmen of Pírán,  
 Were missing in the battle on that day,  
 While of the lineage of Afrásiyáb  
 The fortunes of three hundred slept, howbeit  
 The field, the day, and therewithal the standard—  
 The lustre of the world—were with Pírán:  
 'Twas not the Íránians' day for combating;  
 Their combat-seeking ended in mishap,

V. 856

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. ii. p. 4. The eight survivors include Gúdarz himself and his grandson Bizhan.

They turned their faces from the battlefield,  
Abandoning the wounded to their fate.

Now Gustaham had had his charger killed  
As fortune turned away, and he in mail  
Went spear in hand afoot like one bemused.  
Bízhán, approaching him as day grew dark,  
Said to him: "Ho! Get up and ride behind me:  
There is none dearer to me than thyself."  
So both of them bestrode a single charger.

When day was done they sought the mountain-skirt,  
Abandoning the battle in a rout.  
The Turkman cavaliers, with joyful hearts  
Released from travail and anxiety,  
Returned to their own camp with haughty mien  
And fit for fight, while on the Íranian side  
The ears were deafened by heart-rending cries,  
As all mourned on the mountain friend or kinsman.

Such is the process of this ancient sky!  
Turn as it may there is no remedy,  
And still it turneth o'er us loving none,  
But treating friend and enemy as one,  
Well may it be a cause of dread to all  
Whose fortune's head is bending to a fall!

### § 31

*How Bahrám returned to look for his Whip on the  
Battlefield*

That night, when both the armies were at rest,  
Bahrám came to his sire in haste and said:—  
"O mine illustrious sire and worshipful!  
When I retrieved that crown, and raised it cloudward  
Upon my spear, I lost a whip of mine.  
Those villain Turkmans, when they pick it up,  
Will break their jests upon the great Bahrám;  
The world will be all ebon in mine eyes.

The Turkman general will use a whip  
 That hath my name inscribed upon the leather.  
 I will go quickly and recover it  
 However great and long the toil may be.  
 Doth this ill come upon me from the stars  
 That my renown may go down to the dust?"

Said old Gúdarz: "O son! thou wilt but end  
 Thy fortunes. Wilt thou face the foemen's breath  
 So madly for a stick bound round with leather?"

Giv said: "My brother! go not forth. New whips  
 Have I in plenty—one whose haft is gold  
 And silver, two with handles of fine pearls  
 And other gems. When Farangís unlocked  
 The treasury and gave so many arms  
 And belts to me I took this whip and breastplate;  
 The rest I left unheeded in Túrán.<sup>1</sup>

V. 858

A whip resplendent as the moon with jewels,  
 And five I have besides of golden work  
 Inwrought with royal gems, and all the seven  
 Will I bestow upon thee. Go not forth  
 And wantonly provoke a new engagement."

Said brave Bahrám to Giv: "I cannot hold  
 This shame of small account. Your talk is all  
 Of colour and design, mine of a name  
 Now wedded to disgrace. I will recover  
 My whip or, by endeavouring this, will bring  
 Mine own head to the shears."

Bahrám misread

God's purpose, and his fortune proved averse.  
 The fool is all agog to take his leap  
 Just when his fortune falleth into sleep!

Bahrám pricked forth by moonlight to the field,  
 And bitterly bewailed the slain, those luckless  
 And heart-seared ones. The body of Rívníz

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. ii. p. 376.

Was whelmed in blood and dust, his tunic rent.  
Bahrám the Lion wept for him and cried :—  
“ Alas ! O young and valiant cavalier !  
Men slain like thee are but a pinch of dust !  
For nobles palaces, for thee a trench ! ”

Among his brethren flung on that broad plain  
He roamed. One, stricken by the scimitar,  
Of all those chiefs still lived. He marked Bahrám,  
Wailed, asked his name, and said : “ O Lion ! I live.  
Though flung among the slain, and I have craved  
For two days bread and water and a robe  
To sleep upon ! ”

Bahrám made haste to him  
With loving spirit and a kinsman's heart,  
Began to weep and lacerate his cheeks,  
Rent his own raiment into strips to bind  
The wounds, and said : “ Fear not ; 'tis but a scratch,  
And merely needeth binding. Thou shalt go,  
When I have bound it, to the host again,  
And speedily recover of thy hurts.”

He thus restored one that was lost but knew not  
That he himself was doomed to lose his way.  
He said : “ Stay here, youth ! till I hurry back.  
While I was fighting for the crown I dropped  
My whip ; when I have found it I will come,  
And take thee to the army with all speed.”

Thence hasting to the centre of the field  
He searched about until he found the whip,  
Which was amid a heap of wounded men  
With much dust showered thereon and blood withal.  
Alighting from his steed he took it up,  
And heard the sound of neighing. His steed likewise  
Perceived the neighing of some mares, became  
As nimble as Ázargashasp, rushed off,  
And turned its head toward them while Bahrám  
In dudgeon followed after in his tunic

And helmet, with the sweat upon his face  
 With hurrying, until he reached the horse  
 And, having caught it, mounted carrying  
 In hand an Indian sword; but, when he spurred,  
 The steed moved not a foot. Both man and horse  
 Were covered o'er with dust and sweat. Bahrām  
 Was so chagrined that with his scimitar  
 He slew the steed. Thence to the battlefield  
 He went as swift as wind. There all the plain  
 Was covered with the dead, and all the ground  
 Like cercis-bloom. "How can we make our way  
 Upon the plain," he said, "without a horse?"

V. 860

The foe grew ware of him and from the centre  
 There hastened forth a hundred cavaliers  
 To capture him and from the battlefield  
 Convey him to Pīrān. Bahrām the Lion  
 Strung up his bow and showered shafts upon them—  
 A hero's shafts—so who could bide about him?  
 He slew or wounded most of them and sprang  
 Like some fierce lion at his enemies.  
 The rest withdrew and sought Pīrān, exclaiming:—  
 "Behold a Lion both in pluck and might,  
 Who though afoot will do his kind in fight!"

## § 32

*How Bahrām was slain by Tazhāc*

The troops on their return informed Pīrān  
 Of that youth's deeds, and much talk passed thereon.  
 Pīrān inquired: "Who is this man? What name  
 Hath he among the noble?"

One replied:—

"Bahrām the lion-queller, the host's lustre."

Pīrān said to Rūfn: "Arise. Bahrām  
 Can not escape. If thou canst take him living

The age will rest from strife. Take troops enough,  
For he is famed and valiant."

Hearing this

V. 861

Rûin went off on hostile thoughts intent.  
Bahrâm perceived him quick as dust and showered  
Shafts on him, sitting on a mound the while,  
A Lion bold with shield before his head.  
Rûin son of Pîrân was arrow-pierced,  
The others lost all keenness for the fight,  
They came disheartened to the paladin,  
Full of concern and dudgeon, saying thus:—  
"None ever fought so, and we have not seen  
In any stream so fierce a crocodile."

Pîrân was sore distraught at this account,  
And trembled like the leaf upon the tree;  
Then mounting on his fiery steed went forth,  
Accompanied by many warriors,  
And coming to Bahrâm said: "Famous chief!  
Why is it that thou combatest afoot?  
When thou wast in Tûrân with Siyâwush<sup>1</sup>  
Thou usedst to be prudent, shrewd, reserved:  
We should eat bread and salt together, we  
Should sit together and become fast friends.  
With such high lineage and native worth,  
Such lion-manhood and exceeding prowess,  
Thy head must not be levelled with the dust,  
And kin and country sorrow for thy sake.  
Come let us make a covenant by oath  
On such wise as shall satisfy thy heart;  
Then will I make affinity with thee  
And, having made it, will advance thee more.  
Thou canst not fight against these famous troops  
On foot! Be not a traitor to thyself."

Bahrâm said: "Paladin wise, shrewd, and ardent,  
My lips have tasted nothing for three days,

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II. p. 249 *seq.*

V. 862

And day and night have I been combating;  
 But yet I must resume the fight forthwith  
 Unless thou wilt provide me with a steed  
 To bear me back to the Íránians,  
 Back to the old Gúdarz son of Kishwád."

Pírán said: "Know'st thou not, O atheling!  
 That I can countenance no such design?  
 What I suggested is the better course:  
 Thou art a brave man; act not recklessly.  
 Consider that the horsemen of our host  
 Hold it no small dishonour to themselves  
 That many of the seions of the great—  
 Men who wore diadems, well skilled in war—  
 Were killed or wounded by thee in the fight,  
 And smirched with dust. Who will approach Írán  
 Now but with tingling in his blood and brain?  
 If there were no fear of Afrásiyáb,

And that his heart would be enraged at me,  
 I would, O youth: provide thee with a steed  
 To bear thee homeward to the paladin."

He spake thus, turned about, and went his way,  
 Love in his heart but prudence in his head,  
 While from the host Tazháv—a man whose might  
 Surpassed an elephant's—came forth to meet him,  
 And asked him what had passed. Pírán replied:—  
 "There is no warrior equal to Bahrám.

I gave him out of kindness much good counsel,  
 Showed him his course, and proffered goodly league;  
 Mine offers found no access to his heart;  
 He fain would go back to the Íránian host."

Tazháv replied: "Love will not win his soul;  
 Now I will go and if I capture him  
 Afoot will put him 'neath the stones forthwith."

V. 863

He hurried to the field impetuously,  
 Where brave Bahrám was all alone in arms,  
 And, when he saw Bahrám with spear in hand,

Cried loudly like a furious elephant,  
And said to him: "Thou wilt not get away  
In this fight from these famous warriors.  
Dost thou expect to go back to Írán?  
Dost thou expect to lift thy head on high?  
Thou hast cut off our princes' heads. Abide,  
For now thine own time draweth to a head."

He bade his mates: "Lay on and give it him  
With arrow, double-headed dart, and dagger."

The troops closed in a body on Bahrám,  
All who were chief among the valiant men,  
While he the hero having strung his bow  
Dimmed with his shafts the brightness of the sky.  
When arrows failed he took his spear in hand,  
Till plain and hill were like a sea of gore,  
And when the spear was cloven he still shed blood  
With mace and sword like raindrops from a cloud.  
The fight continued on this wise: Bahrám  
Was wounded by the shafts of his brave foes,  
And, when the hero's strength and vigour failed,  
Tazháv came up and struck him from behind  
A sword-cut on the shoulder. Brave Bahrám  
Fell from the hillock on his face; the hand  
That used to wield the sword was smitten off;  
He ceased from combating and all was over.  
E'en fell Tazháv grew hot of heart for him,  
And, as in shame and grief he turned his reins,  
He felt the warm blood tingling in his veins.

§ 33

*How Gív slew Tazháv in Revenge for Bahrám*

When bright Sol showed its back, Gív, heart-oppressed  
About his brother, spake thus to Bízhan:—  
"Joy of my heart! my brother cometh not!

V. 864

We must go forth and ascertain his case;  
Let us not have to sorrow for the slain."

The valiant pair departed swift as dust  
Toward the battlefield—the place of strife.  
They sought him everywhere and, having found him,  
Rushed anxiously toward him, shedding tears  
Of blood. He lay—a wreck of gore and dust;  
One hand was severed; all was over with him.  
The gallant Gív fell from his charger's back,  
And roared out like a lion. At the sound  
Bahrám moved, turned, and gaining consciousness  
Spake thus to Gív: "O seeker after fame!  
When thou hast shrouded me upon my bier  
Avenge me on Tazháv; that Bull may not  
Withstand the Lion. From the first Pírán,  
The son of Wísa, proved a friend to me,  
Unlike the chiefs of Chín who sought revenge,  
And then Tazháv, the injurious, gave these wounds,  
Forgetting birth and rank."

Gív, when Bahrám

Had spoken this, wept tears of gall and said:—  
"I swear by God the Judge Omnipotent,  
By white day and by azure night that till  
I shall avenge Bahrám my head shall see  
No covering save a Rúman helm."

All vengeance

And grief he mounted, Indian sword in hand.

V. 865

Now when the world's face dusk'd Tazháv returned  
From outpost duty. Spying him afar  
Brave Gív rode toward him with a freer breath  
On seeing him thus parted from the host,  
No chiefs or warriors near. Gív loosed his lasso,  
And caught the foe about the waist forthwith,  
Then placed the lasso 'neath his thigh, wheeled round,  
And lightly dragged Tazháv from saddle-back,  
Flung him to earth disgraced and all forlorn,

And springing from the saddle bound his hands.  
 Gív, mounting, like a madman haled Tazháv  
 Along the ground who begged for mercy, saying:—  
 "No fight is left in me, thou valiant man!  
 What have I done that of this countless host  
 Thou givest me to-night a glimpse of Hell?"

Gív struck him with the whip two hundred times  
 Across the head, and answered thus: "No words!  
 Dost thou not know, thou wretch! that thou hast set  
 A fresh tree in the garden of revenge—  
 One that will reach to heaven, one whose trunk  
 Is fed on blood while daggers are its fruit?  
 Since thou must hunt Bahrám thou shalt explore  
 The Crocodile's strait gullet, for the ill  
 That robbed Bahrám of life wrung Gív's heart too."

"Thou art the eagle and the lark am I,"  
 Tazháv replied. "I bore Bahrám no grudge,  
 Nor caused his death; the cavaliers of Chín  
 Had slain him ere I came."

"Pernicious wretch!"

Said Gív, "spare thine excuse and futile words."

Gív dragged him to Bahrám, the wounded Lion.  
 And said: "Behold this faithless head! I pay  
 The savage with the meed of savagery.

V. 866

I thank the Maker, the Omnipotent,  
 That fate hath granted to me time enough  
 To take thy foeman's life before thine eyes."

Tazháv begged quarter, saying: "That hath been  
 Which was to be. How will it profit thee  
 To take my head?"

Then wallowing in the dust  
 Before Bahrám he cried: "O noble man!  
 I will be thy soul's slave and wait upon  
 The keeper of thy tomb."

Then said Bahrám  
 To Gív: "Whoever liveth hath to die.

Though he hath done me hurt he need not taste  
The pangs of death, so spare his guilty head  
That he may keep my memory alive."

But Gíy, who saw his brother with such wounds,  
And him that did the hurt a captive, seized  
Tazháv's beard with a shout and headed him  
As 'twere a lark! Bahrám wept blood and marvelled  
At heaven's processes, then raised a cry  
Whose like, so strange it was, none ever heard:—  
"If I shall slay, or thou slay in my presence,  
My brothers or my kinsmen will be slain!"

This said, the brave Bahrám gave up the ghost.  
"Tis ever thus with this world! He that would  
Obtain the reins must bathe his hands in blood,  
Slay or be slain! Shun thou ambition's mood.

V. 867

Brave Gíy wailed o'er Bahrám and strewed dark dust  
On his own head, then, having bound his brother  
Upon Tazháv's steed, mounted presently,  
He brought the body from the battlefield,  
And had a royal sepulchre prepared.  
He filled the skull with spicery and musk,  
Enwrapped the corpse in silk of Chín, and set it  
In royal state upon an ivory throne  
To sleep, suspending over it a crown,  
And painting the tomb's portal red and blue:  
Thou wouldst have said: "Bahrám hath never been."

The famous warriors were absorbed in grief  
For fortune changed, and for Bahrám their chief.

## § 34.

*How the Íránians went back to Khusrau*

When bright Sol topped the mountains, and the head  
And crown of white day showed, the scattered troops  
Began to gather, and their converse ran:—  
"Full many of the Íránian host are slain!

Our leader's fortune hath deserted him,  
So mighty were the Turkmans' hands in fight!  
The army must not tarry longer here:  
We verily must go before the Sháh,  
And see how fortune turneth. If his heart  
Be not intent on war then thou and I  
Have no occasion to exert ourselves.  
The sires have lost their sons, the sons their sires,  
And most are wounded or in sore distress;  
But if the Sháh shall bid us to engage,  
And shall equip a noble host, then we  
Will march, our hearts filled with revenge and strife,  
And make the world too narrow for our foes."

Thus minded they retreated from those marches,  
Their eyes surcharged with tears, their hearts with  
anguish,

As brother sorrowed over brother's blood,  
And sighs were on their tongues for kinsmen slain.  
They marched together to the Kása rúd,  
Farewelling with their tongues their fallen friends.

The scouts that went forth from the Turkman host  
Saw none remaining on the battlefield,  
And tidings reached Pirán the son of Wísa :—  
"The land is cleared of the Íránians."

Pirán, on hearing this, without delay  
Sent forth spies secretly on every side  
And, being certified that that proud foe  
Was gone indeed, released his heart from care.  
He set forth with an escort at the dawn,  
And went about to view the battlefield.  
The plain and mountains, valleys and ravines,  
Had tents and tent-enclosures numberless.  
He gave them to the soldiers, marched away,  
And marvelled at the process of the world :  
One day a rise, another day a fall,  
Now all is gladness and then terror all,

In sooth our best course is the cup to raise  
That maketh earth look bright, and fleet the days.

Pírán sent one to tell Afrásiyáb,  
Who heard and joyed released from care and trouble.  
The multitude light-hearted in their gladness  
Adorned the road whereby Pírán must pass ;  
They decorated all the roofs and doors,  
And poured out drachms in showers upon his head.  
As soon as he approached Afrásiyáb  
The king went forth with gifts to welcome him,  
And called down many a blessing on him, saying :—  
"Thou hast no peer among the paladins."

v. 869

Then from the palace of Afrásiyáb  
For two weeks rose the sounds of harp and rebeck,  
While on the third Pírán resolved to go  
Rejoicing to his home. The Turkman king  
Made ready presents for him : thou wouldst be  
Impatient if I told of the dinárs,  
The royal jewels, belts of gold with gems,  
The Arab steeds with golden furniture,  
The Indian scimitars with golden sheaths,  
The splendid throne of teak and ivory,  
The couch of turquoise and the amber crown,  
The girls from Chín, the boys from Rúm, with beakers  
Of turquoise filled with musk and spicery.  
This wealth Afrásiyáb sent to Pírán,  
And added many other gifts beside,  
While as the general left the royal presence  
The king addressed him thus : "My loyal hero !  
Be prudent, keep the fellowship of priests,  
And guard the army from the enemy.  
Dispatch in all directions trusty men  
To act as spies and privily withal,  
For Kaí Khusrau is now possessed of wealth ;  
Beneficence and justice deck his land.  
Since noble lineage and crown and throne

Are thine desire not any good beside.  
Be not secure because the foe hath gone,  
But seek fresh tidings as occasion serveth.  
Thy soul will suffer if thou sleep'st at ease  
So long as Rustam is the paladin—  
The only man that giveth me concern—  
For his whole business is to seek revenge.  
I fear that he will rouse himself and lead  
The armies of Írán against 'Túrán."

Pírán, as captain of the host and kinsman,  
Accepted all the counsel of the king,  
And set forth with his troops toward Khutan.

Now that the story of Farúd is ended  
Hear the campaign wherein Kámús contended.

## PART II

### THE STORY OF KÁMŪS OF KASHÁN

#### ARGUMENT

THE poet, having offered up his praises to the Maker, goes on to tell of the wrath of Kai Khusrau with the host. Ultimately, however, at Rustam's request, he restores Tūs to favour, and sends him against Tūrān. Tūs is again unsuccessful, and is beleaguered on a mountain. The news reaches Kai Khusrau, who dispatches Rustam with reinforcements, while Afrisiyāb sends Kámūs of Kashán and the Khán of Chín with vast hosts to assist his general Pírān. Fierce fighting follows, and Kámūs is slain by Rustam.

#### NOTE

In its earlier scenes this campaign is a variant of the preceding one. In both Tūs commands the Íránians and is defeated, in both the Gúdarzians suffer great losses, in both there are a snow-storm and a night-attack, and in both the Íránians take refuge on a mountain. Naturally the details vary, but the general similarity is unmistakable. Nothing but the existence of a variant can account for the fact that Tūs is put in command again after his behaviour in the first campaign, and there is a legend, probably known to Firdausi, which puts a different complexion on the matter.<sup>1</sup> In the poem the difficulty is got over by the intervention of Rustam, who begs the culprit off, as he does later on in the case of Gurgín.<sup>2</sup> In the second night-attack, in which the positions of assailants and defenders are reversed, Húmán takes just the part that Giv is represented as taking on the first occasion.

If we are content to regard the account given in the poem of the latter part of this campaign merely as Firdausi has presented it, perhaps we may identify the Kashán with which Kámūs' name is associated as that mentioned by Tabarí<sup>3</sup> and situated in

<sup>1</sup> See p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 331.

<sup>3</sup> ZT. iv. 184.

Ferghána, which is now a province of Russian Turkistán. We ought not, however, to overlook the probability that reminiscences of the Parthian civil wars of the days of Gotarzes and Vardanes have been embodied in the story. In this case, as in that of the wars of Gushtásp and Arjásp later on, what in reality were civil broils came in time to be looked back upon as wars between Irán and Túrán. With the historical fact of the great Persian satraps ranging themselves in opposing camps before us, there seems no reason why the Kashán originally intended may not have been the one in Persia on the highroad between Ispahán and Tíhrán. Firdausi's account, however, clearly favours that in Turkistán, and we must not forget that the nomads took part in the contention between the rival Parthian princes.<sup>1</sup>

§ 28. The story of Rustam's fight with Ashkabús is famous both on account of its own merits and for the curious legend told in connexion with it. One day, it is said, at the court of Mahmúd a discussion arose as to the merits of Firdausi as a poet, and it was arranged between his supporters and detractors in the presence of the Sultán that he should put one of the legends, of which nothing but the bare facts remained, into verse the same day, to ascertain how far his version could be considered an improvement on the original. The story chosen was that of Rustam's fight with Ashkabús of Kashán. Firdausi's rendering of the episode delighted the assembly, the lines about the stringing and discharging of the bow especially fascinating Mahmúd, who repeated them several times and praised them highly. That night Firdausi dreamed that he met Rustam at the gate of Makná Báđ. The hero was on foot, fully armed, of terrible aspect, and with bow in hand, just as the poet had described him. Rustam greeted the poet graciously, but wept and said: "I desire to pay my debt to thee, but have not power to do so. However, when I took the torque from the neck of the foe, and desired not to retain it, I made a hole in the ground yonder with the head of my spear, and buried the torque there. Go now and take it up." He pointed out a little hillock on the sand, and, having placed an arrow upon his bow, shot at it. Firdausi remembered the dream and, some time afterward, happening to pass by Makná Báđ in attendance on the Sultán, he made the story known. The mound was excavated, and several torques of red gold were discovered. The Sultán gave them to Firdausi, who refused to keep them for himself, and distributed them among the other court poets.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> C. Persian Preface, pp. 39-41.

## § 1

*The Prelude*

V. 870

In His name Who is Lord of moon and sun,  
 The name revealed by wisdom to the heart,  
 The Lord of being and uprightness—One  
 That brooketh not perverseness on thy part—  
 The Lord of Saturn, Mars, and Sol, from Whom  
 Our gospel are, our hopes, and dread of doom !

I know not how to praise Him though in thought  
 I pour my soul. He fashioned space and time ;  
 The emmet's foot with proofs of Him is fraught.  
 From yonder circling sun to earthly grime,  
 Bright fire, air, water, all are witnesses,  
 And give thy soul assurance, that He is.

Let it be thine the Maker to revere,  
 Who hath no need of aught, no need of crown  
 And throne, of minister and treasurer,  
 Of less or more, of fortune's smile or frown ;  
 Yet, though He needeth naught, His slaves are we,  
 And bow before His bidding and decree.

V. 871

Since He created wisdom and the mind,  
 Past doubt, and set the heaven and stars on high,  
 In Him supreme the sole Creator find,  
 And Source of happiness and misery,  
 Of night and day, of circling sphere above,  
 Of food and sleep, of anger and of love.

Of Rustam's wondrous deeds there is no scant,  
 His legend in the hearts of all is rife ;  
 A crocodile in water, elephant  
 On land, wise, shrewd of heart, a man of strife,

Consummate both in war and valiancy,  
A man of knowledge, wit, and weight was he.

His battle with Kámús I next present  
In mine own words but based on document,  
So turn now to the rustic minstrel's lay,  
Mark what that man world-proven hath to say.

## § 2

\* *How Khusráu reviled Tús* \*

The troops with Fariburz, Gúdarz, and Gív—  
The shatterer of hosts—went to Írán  
In grief with tearful cheeks. When they had reached  
The road toward Charam and had Kalít  
Above, the waters of Mayam below,  
They spake about the conflict with Farúd,  
And all their gain was anguish and remorse,  
Fear of the Sháh filled every heart with pain,  
For they were guilty and their eyes wept blood.  
They came before Khusráu with souls abashed,  
With wounded livers, and as men in fault  
For having slain their monarch's blameless brother,  
And yielded crown and signet to the foe;  
They came with hearts seared and with folded arms,  
As slaves are wont, before their sovereign.  
Khusráu regarded them with angry looks;  
His heart was full of pain, his eyes of tears,  
And thus he spake to God: "O righteous Judge!  
Thou gavest to me fortune, throne, and prowess,  
But now I shame before Thee. Thou dost know,  
Far better than I know, the why and how  
Of things, or else I should command to set  
A thousand stakes forthwith upon the open,  
And Tús and all that carried arms with him

Should be impaled. I mourned my father's death,  
 My heart was filled with sorrow, pain, and trouble,  
 And now there is new vengeance for Farúd,  
 For I must needs smite off the head of Tús.  
 I said: 'Avoid Kalát, avoid Charam,  
 Though people should shower drachms upon thy head,  
 Because Farúd is with his mother there.  
 He is a hero of the Kaian race—  
 A warrior.' Should he know vile Tús or why  
 The army marched? Of course he would attack,  
 And from the mountain slaughter many chiefs.  
 Why did inhuman and insensate Tús  
 March in such haste against that hold? Good sooth!  
 The Master of the sky no longer favoureth  
 Him and the host. The kindred of Gúdarz  
 Fared ill through him. Be he, his elephants,  
 And drums accursed. I gave him robes of honour  
 And gifts, and sent him forth to fight—my brother!  
 Away with chiefs like Tús son of Naudar!  
 May no such paladins be generals!  
 Alas! alas! the son of Siyáwush—  
 Farúd—with that stout heart, that mace and sword,  
 Who, like his sire, was slain though innocent,  
 Slain by my general and by my troops!  
 None know I worse than Tús, and he is ripe  
 For chain and pit. Brainless and veinless too  
 The wretch is as a dog to me."

He writhed

V. 873 With stricken liver to avenge his brother  
 And father's blood, dismissed the troops disgraced,  
 Wept his heart's blood, and shut to them the door  
 Of audience, being wounded to the soul  
 With anguish for Farúd. The warriors  
 Went sad and sorry to the court of Rustam,  
 And thus excused themselves: "God willed it so!  
 Who wished to fight Farúd? Still when the son,

Of Túš was slain the chieftains' heads grew dark  
 At that disgrace and, when his son-in-law  
 Rívníz fell too, misfortune's worst was done.  
 Who knew the name and bearings of Farúd,  
 And wished to wound him through our monarch's  
     heart?

Plead with the Sháh. Perchance he will refrain  
 From vengeance on the host. Was not Rívníz,  
 The son of Kai Káuš, slain grievously  
 In fight as well—a younger son and warrior,  
 Dear to the father of moon-faced Khusrau?  
 Such is the issue that all battles have,  
 To this a crown, to that a narrow grave!"

## § 3

*How Khusrau pardoned the Írániáns*

When Sol had gilt earth's face, and darksome night  
 Was taken in the toils, shouts rose before  
 The palace portal and the peerless Rustam  
 Came to the Sháh, and said: "O great Khusrau!  
 Throne, crown, and signet-ring rejoice in thee.  
 The Sháh is wroth with Túš and with the host,  
 But pardon their wrong-doing for my sake.  
 When Túš beheld his son and son-in-law  
 Both slaughtered, prudence left his brain and heart,  
 For first, he is not wise but choleric,  
 And next, a son's life is no light concern;  
 So when Rívníz was slain before his face,  
 And that proud cavalier Zarásp withal,  
 No wonder if he blazed. The Sháh should not  
 Take vengeance on him. Then again the host  
 Was ill disposed toward thy glorious brother  
 Because he had not visited the Sháh.  
 Know that the date when each must die is fixed.

V. 374

And be not grieved hereat. Our spirit passeth,  
Or else is made to pass. Three hundred spells  
Will not delay it."

Kai Khusrau replied:—

"O paladin! I sorrowed for this youth,  
But now thy rede is solace to my soul,  
Though still I ache at heart."

Then Rustam kissed

The ground before the monarch of the world.

So when the sun had shot its rays on high,  
And hastened to ascend upon its curve,  
When it had rent its turquoise robes of gloom,  
So that its ruddy, shining form showed through,  
The general, Giv, and other warriors  
Approached the Sháh with blessings, and Tús said:—  
"Live fortunate till time shall be no more.  
Be earth the basis of thy crown and throne,  
And heaven the guardian of thy Grace and fortune.  
My heart is sorrowful, my liver wounded  
With pain for my misdeed, my mind is full  
Of shame, my tongue is all excuse, my soul  
All fault, I burn as 'twere Ázargashasp  
In anguish for the pure souls of Farúd  
And of Zarásp. If I am guiltier  
Than others I am writhing for my deed.  
When valued with Bahrám and with Rívníz  
Mine own life is not worth a single mite;  
So if the Sháh will cease from wrath with me,  
And with this noble but offending host,  
I will go forth to cancel this disgrace,  
And will exalt our fallen heads anew;  
I will share all the army's toils myself,  
Be it to keep my life or lose my head.  
Henceforth I will not look at throne and crown,  
My head shall see naught but a helm of Rám."

The monarch graciously received these words;

His heart grew fresh as roses in the spring.  
 He counselled much with Rustam, with the chiefs  
 And warriors, then sent Tús 'gainst Túrán  
 With elephants and shawms and kettledrums.  
 The company dispersed without delay,  
 And Rustam also homeward took his way.

## § 4

*How Khusráu sent Tús to Tárán*

When bright Sol showed, and when from night's bent  
 bow

Dawn brake, Tús with the great men of the host  
 Came to Khusráu who said: "Trace of this feud  
 Is never lost. Begun by Salm and Túr  
 It had fresh impulse given by Minúchihr,  
 But never was a Sháh so shamed as I,  
 Or earth so glutted with his warriors' gore!  
 The hills have girt them with Gúdarzians' blood  
 For whom weep bird and fish by land and sea,  
 O'er the Túránians' waste the Írinians' hands  
 And feet and trunks lie scattered! Are your counsels  
 Auspicious? Are ye all heart-stirred to vengeance?"

The gallant warriors, with folded arms  
 Before that sunlike and aspiring one,  
 All kissed the ground together—warriors,  
 Such as Ruhhám, Gurgín, Gúdarz, and Tús,  
 Kharrád and Zanga son of Sháwarán,  
 Bízhan and Gív and other men of might.  
 They said: "Well starred, good-hearted Sháh who  
 hast

V. 876

The heart withal to pluck out lions' hearts!  
 We all of us are slaves of thine and hang  
 Our heads in reverence, O Sháh! before thee.  
 If now the Sháh so biddeth we will all

Pour out our souls in fight, nor shall he mark  
Aught ill from us if sun and moon shall lour not."

Khusrau then summoned Giv and seated him  
Upon the throne of greatness, praised him much,  
Bestowing many a gift and mark of favour,  
And said: "Thou seekest toil on mine account,  
But sharest not my treasures. Tûs though leader  
Must not employ the drums and elephants  
Against thy counsel rashly. Didst not see  
How in Bahrâm's case (may his soul rejoice!)  
Great skill in warfare fashioned for itself  
A dark, strait dwelling through the quest of fame  
And ill advice? Brief though our sojourn be  
Fame should remain behind us, not disgrace."

Khusrau gave money, called the commissaries,  
Spake much with Tûs, and sought a lucky day  
According to the stars for setting forth.  
The chieftain Tûs then came as general,  
Received the standard, elephants, and drums,  
And did obeisance while the soldiers shouted.  
The earth heaved underneath the chargers' tramp;  
A dust-cloud gathered from the horses' hoofs;  
The trumpet's blast went up. What with the mass  
Of mail and Kâwa's flag earth's face all turned  
To violet. "The sun," thou wouldst have said,  
"Is quenched, the sky and stars are all asleep."  
The Shâh abode upon the plain with mace  
And elephant till Tûs the general  
Had passed, who on an elephant outspread  
A turquoise litter and thus Shahd-ward sped.

## § 5

*The Message of Pírán to the Army of Írán*

A cameleer bore blast-like to Pírán  
 This message: "I have reached the river Shahd  
 In arms and ready to contend with thee."

Pírán, on hearing this, was sorely grieved  
 That, 'gainst his will, he needs must pack the loads,  
 And went forth with his chiefs—choice cavaliers  
 And brave—to learn about the Íránian host,  
 How many chiefs, and who, were there with Tús.  
 He drew his troops up on his side the stream,  
 And sent a greeting to the Íránian chief.  
 He said: "I everywhere showed kindness  
 To Farangís and to the Sháh. I cried,  
 And seethed as on fierce fire, for Siyáwush;  
 But now the antidote doth bear the bane,  
 I share in all these ills."

Tús was distressed,  
 Grieved at the words and sufferings of Pírán,  
 And said: "Go to Pírán of ardent soul,  
 And say: 'If thou speak'st sooth we have no quarrel.  
 Drop fealty, abandon thy surroundings,  
 And bar this door of fear and road of loss.  
 Go to the Sháh alone, he will requite thee,  
 Give thee a royal crown and paladinship.  
 When he recalleth thy good deeds thy pangs  
 Will pain him to the heart. Gúdarz and Gív  
 And other chieftains, nobles shrewd of heart,  
 Agree herein.'"

V. 878

The envoy went like wind  
 Back to Pírán and told what he had heard  
 From Tús and from Gúdarz of ardent soul.  
 Pírán made answer: "I by night and day  
 Will ope my lips to praise the chieftain Tús."

I will go over, taking of my kin  
 Those who are wise and list to mine advice,  
 And send them, bag and baggage, to Írán.  
 An honoured head is more than crown and throne."

He did not purpose acting in this way,  
 But sought to gain occasion by delay.

## § 6

*How Afrásiyáb sent an Army to Pírán*

Pírán dispatched a camel-post by night  
 To tell Afrásiyáb: "Troops have arrived  
 With shawms and tymbals from Írán, commanded  
 By Gív, Gúdarz, and Tús, whom I have duped  
 And much advised with. Choose a warrior-host  
 Or else the war will be inglorious.

V. 879

We may uproot the foe and fire their land,  
 Else in their vengeance for prince Siyáwush  
 The Íránian army ne'er will rest from strife."

Afrásiyáb thereat convoked his captains,  
 Told what had chanced, and said: "Prepare for war."

Afrásiyáb arrayed a power that dimmed  
 The eye of Sol; that host, so great that earth  
 Was hidden, on the tenth day reached Pírán,  
 Who having victualled and disposed the troops,  
 And loaded up the baggage, marched in haste,  
 Regarding not his promise, to the Shahd.

A scout came in to Tús and said to him:—  
 "Bind thou the drums upon the elephants  
 Because Pírán, perceiving downfall nigh,  
 Spake guilefully. We see the tyrant's standard  
 And army drawn up on the river-bank."

Tús put his battle in array. They ranged  
 The elephants and tymbals on the plain.  
 The two lines, like two mountains, clashed in fight—

The Íranian horsemen and the Turkman troops.  
 The dust-clouds of the hosts so dimmed the sun  
 That fire rose from the stream—the flash of sword,  
 Of dart and javelin—and thou hadst said :—  
 “Earth planted air with tulips!” With the stir  
 Of horsemen with their golden belts, and all  
 The golden helmets and the golden shields,  
 A cloud in hue like sandarach arose,  
 And earth became like ebony with dust.  
 The horsemen’s heads beneath the mighty maces  
 Seemed anvils ’neath smiths’ hammers. Thou hadst  
 said :—

V. 880

“The river is a wine-press running blood,  
 The air is like a reed-bed with the spears!”  
 Then many heads were caught in lasso-coils,  
 Then many an honoured form was cast away.  
 The shroud was mail, the pillow blood and dust;  
 The bosom had been hacked by scimitars.  
 Earth was a cercis-bloom, air ebony;  
 The din of tymbals filled the starry heaven.

What though the ambitious man a crown may gain.  
 Or but the battle’s surge of blood and dust,  
 Yet from this world of our’s depart he must.

Whate’er his portion—antidote or bane.  
 I wot not of the end but, this I know,  
 It is a cause for tears to have to go.

## § 7

*How Tús slew Arzhang*

There was a famous Turkman named Arzhang,  
 One whose renown in warfare reached the clouds.  
 He sent the dust up from the battlefield,  
 And challenged the Íránians. ‘Tús from far  
 Saw him and shouted, drew his sword and asked

That son of Zira: "What name bearest thou?  
Who is thy fellow in the Turkman host?"

He said: "Arzhang am I, a warrior—  
A noble Lion who can bide his time.  
Now will I make the earth quake under thee,  
And cast thy head upon the field of fight."

V. 881

Tús, hearing but disdaining all reply,  
Smote with the glittering falchion in his hand  
That chieftain on the helm, and thou hadst said:—  
"His body never bore a head at all!"

Pírán grieved sorely and the Turkman host,  
And none came forth, but all the warriors  
And chieftains of Túrán drew scimitar  
And massive mace, and shouted to each other,  
Those Lions: "Let us charge and make the world  
Strait to the heart of Tús."

Then said Húmán:—

"To-day we will prepare. Be not cast down.  
If any noble of the Iránians  
Shall come to challenge us we will dispatch  
A man to fight him and will mark the issue,  
But not provoke them rashly. What we need  
Is respite for a day, but when the host  
Is stirring, and the tymbals sound in camp,  
Then from beyond the stream be onslaught made  
With mace in hand if God and fortune aid."

### § 8

#### *How Húmán fought with Tús*

Húmán bestrode and spurred his eagle-steed.  
Thou wouldst have said: "He is an iron wall,  
Or Mount Alburz in mail!" He came before  
The host to fight and grasped a glittering spear.  
Tús too advanced; earth rang with clarion-blare.

"And so from luckless Wísa," he exclaimed,  
 "A miserable Tree like this up-springeth !  
 Hast thou indeed come forth to fight since thou  
 Hast come forth mounted and with spear in hand ?  
 By the Sháh's life and head I would oppose thee  
 Without my breastplate, mace, and Rúman casque,  
 Just like a pard that clutcheth at its prey  
 Among the mountains. Thou shalt see how heroes  
 Fight if thou ventuarest."

Húmán replied :—

"Be not o'er-weening for it is not good.  
 Though fate hath come upon one luckless chief,  
 And by thy hand, hold not the rest in scorn.  
 Arzhang had deemed himself no man at all  
 If matched with me upon the day of battle.  
 But have the Íránian warriors no shame ?  
 Doth not the warm blood boil in any breast  
 In that their leader hath to champion them ?  
 Have their hands failed to fight ? Where are Bízhan  
 And Gív—those noble ones—and where Gúdarz,  
 Son of Kishwád, that taker of the world ?  
 If thou art paladin why hast thou left  
 The centre for the field ? The wise will own not  
 Thy kinship and the sane will hold thee mad.  
 Go, hold up Káwa's standard ; generals  
 Come not to fight in person. Look for one  
 On whom the Sháh bestowed a robe of honour,  
 Some warrior in quest of crown and signet,  
 And order him to battle with the Lion,  
 And bring the hand of the high-handed down.  
 Ill would befall this noble host of thine  
 If thou wert slain by me, thy troops become  
 Abandoned, spiritless, and, if they lived,  
 Discomfited. Save Rustam son of Zál,  
 And Sám the cavalier, I see no noble  
 Like thee within Írán whose ancestors

V. 882

V. 883

Were men renowned and Sháhs. No need of army  
 If thou wilt fight in person! Go thy way  
 That some aspirant from the host may face me;  
 Besides, if thou wilt list to true advice,  
 Wherein my soul and heart confirm my tongue,  
 The bravest smart when they encounter me."

Tús said: "Exalted man! I am the leader,  
 But am withal a horseman of the fray.  
 Thou art a leader of the Turkman troops  
 Thyself! Why then hast thou come on the field?  
 If thy heart will accept advice of mine  
 Seek, 'tis my counsel, for a league with me.  
 Come with the noble captain of thy host  
 Before the Sháh because, while one surviveth,  
 These troops will rest no jot from this revenge.  
 Give not thyself thus madly to the wind,  
 And may my counsel ne'er recur to thee.  
 Leave those who should be slain to fight with us,  
 For not one guilty shall escape our vengeance,  
 So act the wise man's part. The Sháh directed:—  
 'Harm not Pírán. He is my foster-sire,  
 Experienced, and my friend. Strive not with him  
 Unjustly, wantonly, and see that he  
 Hear thine advice.'"

Húmán said: "Right or wrong,

V. 884

When bidden by a king of glorious race,  
 We must go forth: we have no remedy,  
 But must surrender all our heart to him.  
 Pírán himself desireth not this strife,  
 For he is noble, good, and generous."

While Tús was parleying, the face of Giv  
 Resembled sandarach, he left the host  
 Like wind, "O Tús of glorious race!" he cried,  
 "A wily Turkman with his lips afoam  
 Hath come between the lines; why should he speak  
 So long with thee apart? Seek not the door

Of peace, speak only with thy scimitar."

Húmán, on hearing, raged and said to Giv  
Of sleepless fortune: "Wretchedest of all  
The free! perish Gúdarz son of Kishwád!  
Upon the day of battle at Ládán  
Thou sawest me with Indian sword in hand  
Where not one of his seed survived that read not  
The inscription thereupon. For thee, thy fortune  
Is like the face of Áhriman, and mourning  
Is ever in thy house. If Tús slay me  
Men still will use the mace and kettledrum,  
Pírán is living and Afrásiyáb,  
Who will avenge me promptly, but if Tús  
Shall perish by my hand none of his troops  
Will reach Írín. Bewail thy brothers' pangs,  
Why raillest thou at Tús son of Naudar?"

"What wrath is this?" said Tús, "I am thy foe;  
Come let us wheel about, begin the encounter,  
And bend our brows in battle."

V. 885

Then Húmán:—

"All heads beneath a crown or helm must die,  
Since death must come 'tis best upon the field,  
And by the hand of some skilled cavalier,  
A leader, prince, and ardent warrior."

Then, grasping each his massive mace, they charged.  
Earth reeled, day darkened, and a dust-cloud gathered  
Above the scene of strife. Thou wouldst have said:—

"The night hath come on them by day, the sun—  
The lustre of the world—is blotted out!"

Those mighty maces clashed and bent like bows  
Of Chách, the ring of steel rose to the sky,  
The wind of that contention reached the Shahd!

Thou wouldst have said: "Stone heads are in those  
helms,

Those warriors' blows have blackened death's own face;"  
They took in hand their Indian scimitars,

V. 885

And sent sparks streaming out of stone and steel  
 Till with the chieftains' might the trenchant blades  
 First bent, then shivered. Dust-smirched and athirst  
 Each warrior clutched the other's leathern belt,  
 And pressed with all his weight upon the stirrups,  
 But neither came to dust. Húmán's belt snapped.  
 He leapt upon a fresh steed while Tús took  
 His quiver, strung his bow, and set thereon  
 A poplar arrow. He began to shower  
 His shafts upon his noble foe and wheeled  
 To left and right as horsemen use to do.  
 The points of steel and eagle-plumes bedimmed  
 The mid-day sun, the world became as 'twere  
 Night's second watch, its face like diamonds.  
 Pierced by a poplar shaft Húmán's steed fell;  
 He raised his shield to save his face and head.  
 On seeing him afoot upon the field,  
 And holding not his own, the Turkman chiefs  
 Brought him a noble mount, but when Húmán  
 Had seated him upon the bark-lined saddle,  
 With Indian sword in hand, the men of name  
 And warriors all drew near to him and said:—  
 "It groweth dark, there is no time, and strife  
 Is over for the day. May evil eyes  
 Be far from thee and fighting end in feast."

V. 887

Húmán the warrior turned his rein (Tús raising  
 His own lance to him), left the field, and sought  
 Pírán. A shout rose from the Turkman host:—  
 "How didst thou fare when face to face with Tús,  
 O warrior? Our hearts were full for thee!  
 God only knoweth what we felt!"

That Lion

Replied: "O brave and veteran warriors!  
 The day will bring us triumph, we shall take  
 You shining flag, all joy will be your portion,  
 And I shall have the stars of heaven for mine."

This for his part was shouting through the night  
Till cock-crow : " Is Húmán the man for me ?  
A raging lion should my foeman be."

## § 9

*How the Íránians and Túránians fought the second Time*

Now when high heaven had made its Crown of Jet,  
And flung Pastilles on Lapislazuli,  
The pickets hurried forth on every side,  
And set the watch around the camps, but when  
Sol showed in Cancer, and the world became  
Fair as a Rúman's face, from both the camps  
The sound of tymbals rose, the world was filled  
With the blare of clarions, air was thick with flags,  
Which gleamed red, yellow, black, and violet,  
The warriors bared their weapons, and rode forth  
To battle. Thou hadst said : " Heaven, earth, and time  
Don iron," while the radiant sun was veiled  
By dust of caracoling cavaliers,  
And, what with neigh of steeds and din of drums,  
Heaven kissed the earth. Húmán the chieftain wheeled  
Before the ranks, a shining dart in hand,  
And cried : " When I shall raise the battle-shout,  
Urge on my charger and seethe up with rage,  
Then draw ye forth your falchions as one man,  
And hold your shields of Chín above your heads.  
See nothing but your horses' crests and reins,  
I want no bow, I want no lance's point,  
But armed with sword and club and massive mace,  
As is the use and wont of warriors,  
Throw down your reins upon your horses' necks,  
And give and take the buffets as they come."

V. 888

This said, the gallant horseman lion-like  
Went to Pírán : " O paladin !" he cried,

"Unlock the weapons of our warriors,  
Keep not *dínárs* within the treasury,  
And hoard not arms. If we prevail to-day  
Thy heart shall pluck the fruit of favouring stars."

On his side Tús arrayed his host as 'twere  
The eye of chancie-leer. The warriors blessed him,  
And hailed him as the paladin of earth,  
Who triumphed in the battle, and whose valour  
Sent dust up from Húmán. Then to Gúdarz,  
Son of Kishwád, said Tús: "Let all wot well  
That if we march forth, and our foes prevail,  
Our trust must be in God, not in ourselves;  
He may assist us, else the day is lost.

V. 889

At present let the chiefs with golden boots  
Remain with Káwa's standard. Let none quit  
The mountain; this is not the day and season  
For strife and stir. Good sooth! the enemy  
Out-number us two hundred times or more!"

Gúdarz replied: "If God will but avert  
Our evil day the fact of more or less  
Importeth not. Daunt not the Íránians,  
For if the sky turn over us for ill  
To wait is no avail. Array the host;  
Dash not our souls with what may be."

So Tús,

The chieftain, put the battle in array—  
Men, drums, and elephants of war; the footmen  
Went with the baggage to the heights, Gúdarz  
Was on the right, Ruhhám shared with Gurgín  
The left, the troops were ranked, anon the sky  
Shook with the roar of drum and clarion,  
The heart of circling heaven was rent, the sun  
Was choked with dust, none saw the ground beneath him,  
The murky clouds rained showers of diamonds,  
Fire flashed from helm and sword, the spear-heads  
gleamed,

V. 890

And massive maces whirled. Thou wouldst have said :—

"The air is mace and iron, and the earth  
Horseshoes and mail." The plains and dales ran blood,  
And swords were lamps that lit a world of night.  
No one knew head from foot, such was the din  
Of drum and clarion! Tús said to Gúdarz :—  
"Night cometh and the astrologer hath told me :—  
'To-day until the night's third watch is passed  
The warriors from their seimitars will pour  
Blood on the field, like rain from some dark cloud ;  
But victory, I fear me, in the end  
Will rest with our revengeful foes.'"

Shídúsh,

Ruhbám, Gív, Gustaham, Kharrád, Fárhád,  
And brave Barzin came forth between the hosts.  
Came liver-wounded, eager for revenge,  
Like troops of dívs upon a murky night,  
While in all quarters díns assailed the clouds.  
Húmán on his side mountain-huge led forth  
His army troop on troop, and none could tell,  
Amid the mass of maces, mallets, swords,  
And spears, the stirrups from the reins. He said :—  
"Our work to-day must not be like the fight  
Of yesterday, but we must sweep the earth  
Of foemen lest they seek revenge hereafter."

V. 891

Then Tús advanced with foot-men, elephants,  
And kettledrums, while spear-men, pavisers,  
And javelin-men drew up before the horse-men.  
"Leave not your posts," he said, "and hold your shields  
And spears in front of you, and we will see  
The massive mace-play of their chivalry."

## § 10

*How the Túránians used Sorcery against the Host of Írán*

Among the Turkmans there was one Bázúr  
By name, adept in magic, versed in guile  
And sorcery, and learned in the tongues  
Of Chín and ancient Persia. To that warlock  
Pírán said : "Scale the mountain-top and send  
Snow, cold, and blast upon the Írinians."

V. 892

That sorcerer sped thither, and forthwith  
Came snow and storm. The Íránian spearmen's hands  
Failed in the snow and stress. Amid the tumult  
And icy blast the warriors' war-cry rose,  
And arrows rained. "Let all the army charge,"  
Pírán bade. "While their hands freeze to their spears  
None can show prowess."

With a shout Húmán

Charged like a lusty div. They slaughtered so  
That 'twixt the lines there was a sea of gore,  
The vales and wastes were filled with snow and blood,  
The horsemen of Írán were overthrown,  
Till corpses left no room to wheel; the ground  
Was blocked by snow and fallen. Tús the leader  
And other chiefs cried bitterly to heaven :—  
"O Higher than all knowledge, sense, and reason,  
Not at, or in, but everywhere! we all  
Are Thy transgressing slaves and in our straits  
Appeal to Thee, for Thou wilt help the helpless,  
And art the Lord of fire and icy blast.  
Deliver us from this excessive cold;  
We look for aid to Thee and Thee alone."

V. 893

A sage approached Ruhhám and showed the height  
Where bold Bázúr was stationed with his spells.  
Ruhhám wheeled round and quitting field and host,  
And girding up his mail-skirts to his waist,

Clomb to the mountain-top. The warlock saw him,  
 And, grasping a steel mace of Chín, advanced  
 To fight. Ruhhám, approaching, quickly drew  
 His trenchant scimitar and hacked away  
 The warlock's hand. Like Doomsday came a blast,  
 And swept the murk from heaven. Staying thus  
 The sorcerer's hand the brave Ruhhám descended,  
 Regained the plain, and mounted while the air  
 Resumed its azure vault and radiant sun.  
 Ruhhám said to his sire: "'Twas sorcerer's work,  
 And how he played the mischief as we fought!"

The Sháh's troops saw the field a sea of blood  
 Strewn with Íranian heads and headless trunks.

Then spake Gúdarz to Tús: "No need have we  
 For elephant or drum-beat. Let us all  
 Draw sword and charge, and slay or else be slain.  
 Good sooth! our time is coming to an end;  
 This is no day for lasso, shaft, or bow."

Tús said: "O thou experienced veteran!

\* The sky is ridded of that icy blast.

Why should our heads be scattered to the winds,  
 Now that the Helper giveth Grace and strength?  
 Expose not thou thyself, for in this strife  
 Our warriors will avail to do our will.

Go not to meet thy fate or recklessly  
 Advance against our foes but tarry thou  
 With Káwa's standard at the army's centre,  
 And blue steel sword in hand. Bízhan and Gív  
 Together lead the right; upon the left  
 Is Gustaham; Ruhhám is with Shidúsh  
 Before the lines; Guráza's lips are foaming  
 For vengeance. If I shall be slain, retreat  
 Back to the Sháh, but death is nobler far  
 For me than shame and every foeman's jeers.'

Such is the world, all anguish and all woe  
 Seek not addition if thou canst forbear,

For that will bite thee some day and will ne'er  
Prolong existence for thee here below.

Again arose the blast of clarions,  
The clangour of the gongs and Indian bells.  
What with the din of warlike cavaliers,  
The gleam of sword and crash of battle-ax,  
What with darts, maces, shafts, and javelins,  
The earth became as 'twere a sea of pitch.  
The plain was filled with trunkless heads and arms,  
The crashing of the maces filled all ears,  
But, since the face of cruel fortune loured  
The Íránian warriors showed the foe their backs.  
Then Tús, Gúdarz, and gallant Gív, Shídúsh,  
Bízhan, and lion-like Rúhhám all took  
Their lives in hand and went in quest of fame  
Before the embattled lines. All those with Tús,  
The nobles and the chiefs, poured out their blood  
Before the host, but those behind them fled.  
Then said an archmage to that warrior-chief:—  
"The army is no longer at thy back:  
The foe must not surround thee and destroy  
Both host and general."

Tús said to Gív:—

"Our soldiers' brains and wisdom are no mates  
Since they have left us thus, and in their folly  
Turned from the fight; go thou and rally them;  
Protest our foemen's jeers, our monarch's shame."

Gív went; the host returned; the plain and desert  
Seemed filled with slain. Then Tús addressed the  
captains:—

"This is a struggle and a strife of chiefs!

But since the cheek of day is darkling now,  
And all the land is like a sea of blood,  
Seek we a resting-place if night can rest.  
Our slain perchance a bed of sand may have,  
And coverlet of earth by way of grave."

## § 11

*How the Iránians retreated to Mount Hamdūwan*

The Iránians drew back with heads abashed  
 And livers wounded for their friends, and when  
 The moon rose o'er the mountains as it were  
 A king triumphant on his turquoise throne,  
 Pírán the chieftain called his warriors,  
 And said: "Not many of the foe remain,  
 And, when the Topaz Sea shall dash its waves  
 Upon the Realm of Lapislazuli,  
 I will destroy those that survive and make  
 The Sháh's heart writhe."

The troops went off rejoicing,  
 And all the night before the tent-enclosure  
 Sat sleepless through the sounds of harp and rebeck;  
 But for their part the Iránians mourned, the sires  
 Lamented for their sons, the killed and wounded  
 Hid all the plain, earth ran with great men's blood.  
 To right and left the field was strewn with hands  
 And feet unsortable. All night men raised  
 Their stricken friends, bound up and stitched their  
 wounds,

Left strangers to their fate, and burned the slain.  
 Full many of the kindred of Gúdarz  
 Were hurt or killed or captive. At the news  
 He wailed, earth shook beneath the Iránians' cries,  
 The chiefs all rent their raiment, he himself  
 Cast dust upon his head, exclaiming: "None  
 With hoary head hath seen such ills as mine!  
 Why must I still survive with my white hairs  
 Now that so many of my sons are laid  
 In dust? Since that dark day when I was born  
 I have not doffed my tunic. When I went  
 With heroes and my cavaliers to war

My grandsons and my sons supported me,  
 But none of them surviveth our first fight  
 Upon Túránian soil! May be my sun  
 Was once for all extinguished with Bahrám,  
 And hence I see so many chieftains slain."

Tús, hearing of Gúdarz, wept tears of blood,  
 And turned as pale as sandarach. He raised  
 A bitter Magian cry: "Had not Naudar,  
 That holy man," he said, "set in life's garth  
 My feet and roots then travail, pain, and grief,  
 Woe for the dead and anguish in the strife,  
 Had ne'er been mine, for since I girt my loins  
 My heart hath oft been pierced though I survive.  
 Now where there is a pit inter the slain,  
 Restore each trunk its head, and bear the baggage  
 Toward Mount Hamáwan. Take all the army,  
 The tents, and tent-enclosures to the mountain.  
 We will dispatch the Sháh a camel-post;  
 His heart will burn and he will send us troops.  
 I purposed when I sent the cavalier  
 To carry news of us before the battle,  
 That Kai Khusrau should send the son of Zál  
 To lead the reinforcements to the field."

He loaded up and, thinking of the slain  
 With anguish, called his men to horse again.

### § 12

*How the Host of Túrán beleaguered Mount Hamáwan*

V. 897

Now when the bright sun showed its crown, and strewed  
 The Ivory Throne with Camphor, Tús, good sooth!  
 What while the foe were sleeping with fatigue,  
 Had marched ten leagues, and fared thus day and night  
 With heart all sorrow and unbroken fast.  
 He reached Mount Hamáwan and ranked his troops

Upon its outskirts. Every eye was bloodshot,  
Their hearts were seared, their souls like ravens' plumes  
With anguish. Then spake Tús to Gív and said:—

"O full of wisdom and illustrious chief!  
For three days we have marched with neither food  
Nor sleep! Come eat a little and repose  
At ease without thy mail; Pírán no doubt  
Will follow us anon intent on fight.  
Go to the mount thyself, and leave behind  
The freshest of our soldiers with Bízhan."

Gív bare the wounded, weary of the world  
And sick of life, up to the mountain-hold,  
And chose the freshest of his troops for duty.  
"This mountain-top," he said, "must be our home.  
We must recruit."

The outpost-guards descended  
To hold the approaches that no foe might pass,  
And, what with challenges and sound of gongs,  
Thou wouldst have said: "The stones and rocks cry  
out!"

Now when the sun rose o'er the mountain-tops  
The Turkinans' hearts were full of eagerness.  
A sound rose from Pírán's pavilion  
As of an earthquake. He led forth the host  
Like fire, and told Húmán: "The contest surely  
Will soon be over. All their cavaliers  
Are slain or, being wounded, cannot fight."

V. 898

He beat the drums; a shout rose from the waste;  
He led in person. When they reached the field  
They only found a camp without an army,  
And one who went to spy came to Pírán,  
And said: "There is not an Íránian here!"

A shout of triumph rose, the troops awaited  
The orders of Pírán who thus addressed  
The wise men: "Sages famed and worshipful!  
What shall we do now that our foes have fled?"

The horsemen of the host, both old and young,  
 Wroth with the paladin, exclaimed: "The Írániáns  
 Have fled defeated, and the battlefield  
 Is full of dust and blood! This is no time  
 To fear them. We should follow up the foe,  
 Strange if thou partest with thy wits and wisdom  
 The fugitive from wind plunged into water,  
 And we had better hasten than delay."

Pírán replied: "In war the foot of haste  
 Is feebler than delay's. A sea-like host  
 Is gathering before Afrásiyáb;  
 Let us delay till that great power with all  
 Its warriors and fighting-men shall come;  
 Then will we leave none living in Írán:  
 Such is the counsel of the wise. Enough.

Húmán said to Pírán: "O paladin!  
 Vex not thy soul so much on this account.  
 A host—all paladins and cavaliers,  
 Brave men who wield the lasso and the sword—  
 Have left their ground, their tents, and tent-enclosures,  
 Abandoned all and fled. Be sure of this,  
 That they were forced to flee and once for all  
 Show us their backs. We will not let them reach  
 Khusrau and muster at his court afresh;  
 Then from Zábulistán will Rustam march  
 Upon us, this delay cause fearful loss.  
 Now is the time for me to fall on them,  
 And put in practice ruse and artifice.  
 We have the certainty of laying hands  
 Upon Gúdarz and Tús the general,  
 The royal standard, elephants, and drums:  
 Shall we do better by delaying here?"

Pírán replied: "Be still thus shrewd and ardent.  
 So do because thy star and rede are good,  
 And heaven's vault is not so high as thou."

He set forth with his army in pursuit,

And bade Lahhák: "Now tarry not but ply  
The rein with ten score cavaliers and loose not  
The girdle from thy loins till thou hast seen  
Where the Íránians are."

He went like wind,  
And took no thought of rest and food. At midnight  
The Íránian outpost-guards caught sight of him  
Upon the dusky plain, and from the mountain  
Rose shout and sound of gong. 'Twas not the time,  
He saw, to tarry, went back to Pírán,  
And gave him tidings of the Íránian host:—  
" 'Tis on Mount Hamáwan with front well guarded."

Pírán said to Húmán: "Ply rein and stirrup  
In haste, take with thee cavaliers enough,  
Take nobles, warriors, and men of name,  
For with their flag and troops the Íránians  
Have taken refuge on Mount Hamáwan.  
This war involveth further toil, so sharpen  
Thy wits to find a remedy; if thou  
Canst capture Káwa's legacy—his standard—  
Then daylight will be darkened to our foes.  
If thou prevailest cleave the flag and staff  
To pieces with thy trenchant scimitar.  
Lo, I will follow after thee like wind,  
And dally not."

V. 900

Húmán chose thirty thousand  
Túránian horse with shields and scimitars.

Now, when the shining sun displayed the face  
That filleth earth with love, that army's dust  
Appeared afar and from the look-out rose  
The watchman's shout: "An army from Túrán  
Appareth! Upward to the darksome clouds  
Its dust ascendeth!"

Tús, on hearing this,  
Assumed his mail, rose din of trump and drum,  
And all the Íránian chivalry in mass

Ranged on the mountain's foot. Whenas Húmán  
Beheld that mighty army brandishing  
Sword, mace, and spear, and raging like fierce lions  
With Káwa's standard in their midst, he shouted  
Thus to Gúdarz and Tús: "Ye left Írán  
With elephants and drums to be avenged  
Upon Túrán and to invade our coasts;  
Now to the mountain have ye fled like game,  
In utter rout and all fordone with fight!  
Feel ye no shame hereat and no disgrace?  
Are food and rest and sleep in rocks and stones?  
To-morrow, when the sun shall top the hills,  
Will I turn this thy stronghold to a sea,  
Will bring thee from this lofty mountain down,  
Will make thy hands fast in the lasso's coils,  
And send thee to Afrásiyáb, deprived  
Of provand, rest, and sleep, and thou shalt know  
That this thy shift is but a shiftless one,  
And one to be deplored."

V. 901

He sent Pírán

A camel-post full speed. "What sort of fight  
Did we expect?" he said. "Our thoughts were other,  
And we made ready to attack the foe,  
But all the mount is troops and kettledrums,  
The standards wave behind Gúdarz and Tús!  
Take order that as soon as bright day shineth,  
And when the world's Light showeth in the sky,  
Thou mayst be here with troops in war-array,  
And make the plain's face dark with hosts of men."

The message roused Pírán; no time was lost;  
That night he marched on with a sea-like host.

## § 13

*How Pírán went in Pursuit of the Íránians to Mount  
Hamáwan*

When Sol, aweary of its veil of gloom,  
Had bursten through it and come forth, Pírán,  
The leader, reached Mount Hamáwan, and earth  
Was hidden by the dust of troops. "Abide,"  
Thus said he to Húmán, "here where thou art;  
Set not the troops in motion for a while.  
I will hold parley with the Íránian leader,  
And say: 'Why hast thou set up Káwa's standard?'  
Who told him of Mount Hamáwan and now  
When there what hopeth he?"

In hate and vengeance

He came anear the Íránian host and cried:—  
"Illustrious Tús, the lord of elephant,  
Of mace and kettledrum! five months have passed  
Since thou provokedst war, and on the field  
The noblest kinsmen of Gúdarz lie headless,  
While thou hast fled, thy soldiers panting after,  
And like a mountain-sheep hast taken refuge,  
Full of revenge and rancour, in the heights!  
But thou wilt surely come within the toils."

V. 902

Exalted Tús replied: "I mock thy falsehoods.  
Thou didst set wreak afoot among the mighty  
Throughout the world for Siyáwush. Hast thou  
No shame of thy vain words? Hot though they be  
They will not bring me to those toils of thine.  
Ne'er may the world possess a paladin  
Like thee among the men of might and name.  
Thou by an oath didst ruin Siyáwush,  
And wreck earth with his blood, thou madest him  
Stay in Túrán; now war and vengeance stay  
In earth through him. Alas! for that great prince

And noble man whose face once gladdened all !  
 Thou by this practice, such deceit and lies,  
 Wilt gain no lustre in a true man's sight.  
 We could not forage on the battlefield,  
 And therefore have I marched to Hamáwan.  
 News now hath reached the monarch of the world,  
 Who with his mighty men will come anon.  
 The great men of the host have gathered—Zál  
 And Rustam of the elephantine form ;  
 And when the Sháh is fairly on the march  
 I will not leave Túrán field, fell, or crop.  
 Since thou art here behold a task for men :  
 This is no time for ruse and ambuscade."

V. 903

Pírán on that sent forward troops to seize  
 The approaches, and the army mountain-like  
 Moved, troop on troop, upon that mountain-skirt.  
 Pírán, when thus the foemen's foraging  
 Was straitened, laid his plans.

"We," said Húmán,

"Must get possession of the mountain's foot,  
 And I will deal so that the Íránians  
 Shall never gird themselves for vengeance more."

Pírán replied : "The wind is in our face,  
 And none would think of fighting with it so ;  
 But as they have not room for foraging,  
 And nobody would guard a barren rock,  
 They will no longer heed their general ;  
 With warlike eyes grown dim the troops will come  
 To seek not fight but quarter ; 'tis a day  
 For grace and not for setting in array."

## § 14

*How the Iránians made a Night-attack*

Gúdarz and Tús suspected this; the chiefs  
 Were in dismay. Said old Gúdarz to Tús :—  
 "We must fight now. If we have three days' provand  
 We have not more, and not one road is open!  
 We have no tents, no huts, no baggage-train,  
 And this great host will starve! So, when the sun  
 Is wan of face and night's dark veil is seen,  
 Choose we brave cavaliers, descend the heights,  
 And try our fortune in a night-attack,  
 To perish one by one, or else to gain  
 The hero's crown. Such is the end of battles!  
 One hath the dust, another rank and glory."

V. 904

Tús hearkened to Gúdarz; his heart was full  
 Of pain and of the ancient feud. He bode  
 Till night appeared. The sun set; all was dark.  
 When one watch passed, and men had fallen silent,  
 Tús made him ready, called the men of action,  
 Gave one wing to Bízhan, one to Shidúsh  
 And bold Kharrád; the glorious flag he gave  
 To Gustaham with much advice and counsel,  
 Then, shouldering with Gív, Ruhhám, and others  
 The massive mace, made for Pírán and shocked  
 Like fire the Turkman centre. All the field  
 Grew like a sea of blood, a mighty shout  
 Rose from the host, the standard of Pírán  
 Was cloven, and his troops were panic-stricken.  
 Húmán, when he had heard that cry, bestrode  
 His Arab black, came up, saw many slain,  
 And many turning from the fight dismayed,  
 Wept tears of blood upon his breast, and shouted :—  
 "Was there no outpost here? Had ye no stomach  
 For fight? We are three hundred to their one;

V. 905

It is ill sleeping on the field of battle !  
 Ho ! out with sword and mace, and up with shield  
 Of Chín. Now that the moon o'er yonder height  
 Is drawing forth its sword, cut off the foe  
 On every side and let none, combatant  
 Or laggard, 'scape."

Arose the clarions' blast,  
 The warriors pressed forward, and surrounded  
 The Iránian cavaliers like savage lions.  
 Sparks flashed from helm and sword : thou wouldst  
 have said :—

"The sky is raining maces from the clouds !"  
 Night, scimitars, and dust concealed the stars  
 And shining moon. Thou'dst said : "The Iránians  
 Are walled by coats of mail and in a murk  
 As of a sea of pitch !" Then to his men  
 Húmán exclaimed : "Enough ! slay not the chiefs ;  
 Bring me them captive and not arrow-pierced."

They shouted back : "Their plight is hopeless now.  
 Lay on, lay on with mace and javelin,  
 And crown these chieftains' heads with crowns of blood."

Then Túš said to Ruhhám and Gív : "Good sooth !  
 Our lives are but a jest ! Unless the Almighty  
 Shall save our souls and bodies from this seath  
 We are but poised upon an eagle's wings,  
 Or struggling in the waters of the deep !"

Like savage lions leaping from their lairs  
 They charged together, while the sound of drum  
 And pipe and clang of Indian bells and gongs  
 Rose from the foe, men could not see their reins,  
 The horses' crests, or spear-points at their eyes.  
 "Ye have no room," exclaimed Húmán, "for fight  
 Or flight, and evil fortune drave you forth,  
 That ill might reach the guilty."

V. 906

'Mid such strife  
 Abode that warrior-three with paltry powers !

Much thought they then of Rustam, everywhere  
 The prowtest in the fray, and of Shídhúsh,  
 Bízhan, and Gustaham, of great and small;  
 "Good sooth!" said they, "one of the Íránian host  
 Would help us here! We came not to a fight,  
 But madly to the maw of crocodiles!  
 Woe to the throne and portal of the Sháh,  
 For they will capture us anon! Great Rustam  
 And Zál are in Zábulistán! Írán  
 Will be destroyed!"

The din of mace and drum  
 Reached the Íránian host, and Gív and Tús  
 Returned not! Said Shídhúsh and Gustaham,  
 The Lion: "Tús is long engaged!"

Guráza

Said to Bízhan: "Our leader's task is long!"

Anon the din of drums rose from the plain,  
 Air turned pitch-dark and earth to ebony.  
 The warriors made toward the voice of Tús.  
 The field ran blood. As they came up behind  
 All drew their massive maces. Tús, aware  
 That succour had arrived, roared tymbal-like,  
 Loosed rein, and pressed his stirrups, for he felt  
 His fortune rising, while Ruhhám and Gív,  
 Cheered by the voice of brave Bízhan, became  
 Like lions. Thus they fought till break of day,  
 Until the world's Light shone above the mountains,  
 Then they recalled the host and drew it off  
 Toward the rocky heights. The chieftain Tús  
 Harangued the troops: "From set of sun to drum-beat  
 Far from the noble be the evil eye,  
 And may our fighting end in festival.  
 I never heard of warriors displaying  
 Such gallantry as I have seen in you.  
 My first prayer is that Holy God will keep  
 Afar from us the eyes of evil ones.

He is my refuge evermore and He  
 Will take you out of this. I trust withal  
 In Him that presently and swift as smoke  
 An army may come up to our support.  
 Assuredly my speedy camel-post  
 Hath reached ere now the monarch of the world.  
 My letter will inflame his heart anew,  
 The elephantine chief will come to aid us,  
 And with a noble company of Lions.  
 We shall return in triumph, well content,  
 And eager to behold Khusrau again.  
 We will report to that triumphant world-king  
 All that hath passed in public and in private,  
 And through his kindness and his satisfaction  
 Obtain, each one of us, the fruits of fortune."

V. 908

Both hosts ceased fighting,<sup>1</sup> breathed themselves, and  
 left

The battle drawn. On both sides scouts advanced  
 Upon that plain of valiant warriors.  
 Húmán came forth, saw corpses block the road,  
 And thus addressed Pírán: "Withdraw to-day;  
 The battle hath not answered our desires,  
 But when our warriors, approved horsemen,  
 And men have rested I will make a fight  
 Such as the sun and moon ne'er saw."

They went,

Their converse done, each on his schemes intent.

### § 15

*How Kai Khusrau had Tidings of his Host*

News reached Khusrau: "Pírán hath gained the day,  
 Túš hath retired upon Mount Hamáwan,  
 And many a chieftain of the host is missing.

<sup>1</sup> Reading with P.

The portal of the palace of Gúdarz,  
 Son of Kishwád, is void of men of war  
 And chiefs. The very stars are wailing them,  
 The rose no longer groweth in the garden,  
 The world through them is filled with dust and blood,  
 And Tús' high star hath fallen!"

Kai Khusrau,

The famous, heard, and his heart quaked. He bade  
 The elephantine Rustam come to court,  
 And with his host. The sages and the archmages,  
 Famed and experienced of Írán, all came;  
 Khusrau, the chief of chieftains, loosed his tongue,  
 Told how the host had fought, and said to Rustam:—  
 "Exalted one! our ancient state, I fear,  
 Is tottering, whereat my heart is full  
 Of dread. Thou fosterest the crown and throne,  
 World-ruling fortune hath its light from thee,  
 The heart of heaven is on thy sabre's point,  
 And under thee are sky and time and earth.  
 Thou didst dig out the White Dív's heart and brain;  
 The age's hopes are based upon thy love,  
 Earth is the servant of thy charger's dust,  
 And time to thee is like a loving mother.  
 The sun is set a-burning by thy sword,  
 And Venus weepeth at that mace of thine.  
 Thy plumed and pointed shafts make lions weary  
 Of fighting with thee on their day of bale.  
 Since thou hast been a man and worn a helm  
 No foe hath cast his eye upon Írán.  
 Now Tús, Gúdarz, and Gív and other chiefs,  
 With many of the warriors of this land,  
 Have with full hearts and eyes that flowed with tears  
 Fled from the soldiers of Afrásiyáb.  
 Full many of the kindred of Gúdarz  
 Fell on the day of fight and sleep in dust.  
 Those of the army that escaped with life

V. 909

Are broken-hearted on Mount Hamáwan ;  
 Their heads are lifted heavenward ; they pray  
 The Almighty, who is Lord of time and place,  
 That elephantine Rustam may perchance  
 Come to them in God's strength at my command.  
 As I perused the letter in the night  
 I shed my heart's blood freely on my cheeks.  
 I told the thing to no one for three days  
 Save only unto God the Succourer,  
 But now, because the matter hath surpassed  
 All bounds, my heart is full of care therefor.  
 Thou art the hope of host and general :  
 Mayst thou be sound in health and bright in mind ;  
 May thy head flourish and thy heart rejoice,  
 Be thy pure person free from hurt of foe.  
 Ask me for plenty of whate'er thou wilt,  
 Of steeds, of arms, of treasure, and of troops.  
 Go with good counsels and a joyful heart :  
 So great a work must not be slackly done."

The hero answered : " May the signet-ring  
 And crown ne'er lack thee. Heaven remembereth not  
 A king like thee for Grace, for stature, justice,  
 And rede. Khusrau hath heard that ever since  
 Kubád assumed the imperial diadem  
 I have been girded in Íránian quarrels,  
 And have not sat at rest a single day.  
 Mine have been waste, gloom, lion, elephant,  
 Enchanters, lusty dragons, mighty men  
 Both of Túrán and of Mázandarán,  
 Dark nights, and massive maces, and withal  
 Long journeyings and thirsts, for I preferred  
 The door of travail to the stead of ease.  
 So many toils and hardships have I seen  
 That I have never asked a day of pleasure.  
 Thou art the world's king, and a slave am I  
 Girt to perform thy hests. Let not the Sháh

Grieve for the slain, but let thy foes look wan.  
 With belted waist will I draw near to Tús,  
 And gird me to avenge the Íránians,  
 For liver-wounded have I been and girt  
 With mourning for the scions of Gúdarz."

V. 911

When Kai Khusrau heard Rustam's words he wept,  
 And said: "Without thee I desire not life,  
 Or majesty or crown or royal throne.  
 Now be the welkin in thy lasso's noose,  
 And crowned heads in thy bonds."

The treasurer

Unlocked the royal hoard of jewels, crowns,  
 Dínárs, helms, lassos, bows, and belts, oped too  
 The sacks of drachms. The Sháh gave all to Rustam,  
 Thus saying: "O illustrious warrior!  
 Go with the mace-men of Zábulistán,  
 And mighty men and warriors of Kábul,  
 Swift as the blast, not tarrying thyself  
 Or bidding others tarry. From the host  
 Choose thirty thousand swordsmen dight for war,  
 And give to Fariburz son of Káuś  
 Some troops to go on first and seek revenge."

The peerless Rustam kissed the ground and said:—  
 "The bridle and the stirrups are my mates.  
 We will urge on the chiefs; far be repose  
 And idleness from us."

He paid the troops,  
 Went forth upon the plain, prepared for war,  
 And said to Fariburz: "Lead forth at dawn,  
 Conduct the van, and sleep not day or night  
 Until thou come to Tús the general.  
 Say to him: 'Risk not fight, use guile, gain time,  
 And be not rash. Lo! like a blast I come,  
 Not dallying upon the road. Gurgín,  
 Son of Mísád, approved in war, will know  
 What to advise thy host in weal and woe.'"

V. 912

## § 16

*How Fariburz asked to Wife Farangie, the Mother  
of Kai Khusrau*

"O warrior, distributor of crowns,  
Lord of the breastplate, battle-ax, and Rakhsh!"  
Said Fariburz, "I have a secret wish  
That I can tell to no one in the world  
Except to thee, O paladin of earth,  
Who well deservest ring and crown and signet,  
And art the stay and refuge of the host!  
In thee the warriors exalt their helms.  
Know great one of Írán! and may God bless thee,  
That I and noble Siyáwush were brothers,  
And one in blood. 'Tis fit that I should take  
His widow as my wife, exalted chief!  
Urge this upon the Sháh, and thou wilt set  
A crown upon my head."

Then Rustam answered:—

"'Tis thine to bid. I will achieve thy wish."

The elephantine chief went in and said:—

"O famed Khusrau! I have a thing to ask  
That will exalt my head above the moon,  
And I will ask it with the monarch's leave,  
For God approveth. Love and justice reach  
All men through thee, twin-visaged like the sky.  
Now Fariburz among the chiefs and princes  
Hath not a peer; withal for rede and prowess  
I do not see his match, and he desireth  
This of the Sháh—the place of Siyáwush,  
So that, when he is marching to avenge  
His brother's blood, the guardian of his house  
And wealth, the confidant in all his cares,  
May be the daughter of Afrásiyáb,  
None else, they twain to be as sun and moon."

Khusrau on hearing gave consent and said :—  
"O famous man! the feet of fortune trample  
All that reject thy counsel. Naught but good  
Will come from words of thine. Live ever glorious!  
I cannot urge this, as thou know'st. Such speech  
To her would be misplaced, but I will give  
My mother, if she will consent to listen,  
The counsels most conformable with wisdom."

They went together to the moonlike dame—  
The peerless Rustam and benignant Sháh,  
Who said to her: "Thou memory of my sire,  
In good and ill my refuge: I may govern,  
But thou art Sháh to me. Thou know'st the toil  
And travail of the army in this war,  
How many of our mighty men have perished  
In battle with Túrín! I mean to send  
A host with Rustam son of Zál as chief,  
While Fariburz will lead the van, and Rustam  
Himself be champion. He would have thee be  
The wife of Fariburz. What is thy pleasure  
Therein? Be greatness and all good thy mates."

V. 914

On hearing this she thought about old times,  
Distressed and vexed at heart; at length in tears  
She said: "I blame not Rustam; if I did  
It would be misplaced now, for only heaven  
Can say him nay when he requesteth aught."

Then Rustam said to her: "O dame of dames,  
Extolled for spotless worth! Oh! may thy foes  
All perish: Thou, may be, wilt hear my counsel.  
Thou knowest that a woman cannot rest  
Without a spouse, the young without the young,  
And best of all a mate of Kaian race,  
For man is for the woman's sake, and she  
Is far more eager than her spouse for her.  
Victorious Fariburz son of Káuś,  
Fit for the crown, the lustre of the throne,

The brother and the peer of Siyáwush,  
 Is ruler of the more part of Írán;  
 The peopled land and desert both are his.  
 By leave, advice, and order of the Sháh  
 Do I approve thee as the prince's spouse.  
 What sayest thou? Is he approved by thee?  
 Doth Fariburz appear a fitting mate?  
 Thou wilt do well to hearken to my words:  
 Heed what I tell thee and the Sháh's advice."

The Sháh of ladies held her peace awhile  
 In grief, ashamed to speak before her son,  
 Then sighing deeply answered Rustam thus:—

V. 915

"O full of prowess, leader of the folk!  
 Although there is none like him in Írán  
 He cannot take the place of Siyáwush;  
 Yet is my tongue, as thou mayst say, in fetters  
 By reason of thy words, O paladin!  
 What doth the famous monarch now command?  
 I must be girded to perform his will."

Thus, blushing like the roses in the spring,  
 The monarch's mother gave consent. The matter,  
 Since Rustam was so instant, was soon sped:  
 They called the archmagés and drew up the contract.  
 Then Fariburz became Sháh's sire-in-law,  
 And being franked by Kai Khusrau and Rustam  
 Increased his quality and dignity,  
 And gained a robe of honour and new crown.<sup>1</sup>  
 Three days prepared, the fourth achieved, the business,  
 Then Rustam with his gallant warriors  
 Fared toward the plain, while Fariburz with troops  
 Went in advance, resplendent as a star  
 In heaven. Arose the din of clarions,

<sup>1</sup> "C'est ainsi que Feribourz devint, par l'ordre de Kai Khosrou, beau-père du roi, et Rustem fut alors libre de partir. Khosrou combla d'honneurs le Pehlevan, et lui donna, un rang plus élevé, une robe d'honneur et une nouvelle couronne" (Mohl).

And matchless Rustam led his army forth.  
 The Sháh, the world-lord, with his mind all care,  
 Fared with him for two leagues, while Rustam turned  
 Two stages into one upon his way,  
 And rested not at all by night or day.

## § 17

*How Tús saw Siyáwush in a Dream*

One night, about the hour of drum-beat, Tús,  
 Heart-seared and full of trouble, slept and dreamed  
 That from the deep a radiant lustre rose  
 About an ivory throne, and Siyáwush  
 Thereon with Grace and crown, with smiling lips  
 And tongue fair-spoken, turned a sun-like face  
 Upon him. "Stay the Íránians here," he said,  
 "For thou shalt conquer in the fight. Lament not  
 The kindred of Gúdarz, for there is here  
 A rosary all new, and we will quaff,  
 How long we wot not, underneath its blooms."

V. 916

With joyful heart released from pain and grief  
 Tús woke. Then to Gúdarz: "World-paladin!  
 I have beheld a vision in my sleep:  
 Take note that Rustam like a rushing wind  
 Will come anon!"

He bade the pipes to sound,  
 The troops upon the mountain left their posts,  
 The warriors of Írán girt up their loins,  
 And set up Káwa's standard, while Pírán  
 Upon the other side led forth his powers;  
 The dust-clouds dimmed the sun; its eye was dazed  
 By warriors' shouts and by the rain of arrows.  
 The two hosts met, but not a champion showed  
 Before the lines. Húmán said to Pírán:—  
 "We must attack. Why hesitate? The troops

Are not out hunting. Man and beast bear weight."

Pírán said: "Peace! 'Tis not the time for haste  
Or argument. Yestreen from yonder lines,  
And unawares, three with a paltry force  
Assailed us, hungry lions they, we sheep  
Whom cold is driving from the mountain-tops.  
V. 917 I found the whole plain like a stream of blood,  
And famous heads laid low. The Íránians hold  
A barren rock, their chargers sniff at thorns  
Like musk. Wait till they burn upon the crags,  
And die resourceless. Leave no way to pass,  
Side, front, or rear-ward. Since without your fighting  
The foe will come to hand, why change delay  
For haste? Why should we fight? Ten horse will  
serve

As scouts upon the plain. Wait we until  
Our foes lack food and drink, and ask for quarter.  
Unless they can subsist on thorns and flints  
When provand faileth they will take to them  
And die."

They left the field, went to their tents,  
And scouts were posted while the warriors loosed  
Their belts and turned to sleep and banqueting.  
The chieftain Tús went also to his camp,  
With full heart and with cheeks of ebony,  
And thus addressed Gúdarz: "Affairs grow dark;  
The fortunes of the Íránians are distraught.  
Troops compass us, our beasts' feed is all thorny,  
And food is not o'er-plenteous with the host!  
Unsheathe at dawn. Rank on the mountain-skirts.  
If our good star prove helpful it will give us  
Our will upon our foes, while if the Judge  
Of heaven shall end us with the scimitar,  
No more or less can hap than His decree,  
So measure not your breaths in your dismay.  
Death too with high renown is goodlier

Than life with fear and overthrow."

They closed  
With what their fortune-favoured chief proposed.

V. 918

### § 18

*How Afrásiyáb sent the Khán and Kámús to help Pirán*

When from the sign of Cancer Sol reached out,  
And rent the musk-hued Veil, a messenger  
Came from the monarch to Pirán and said :—  
"Troops throng from every side—a host whose dust  
Would make a desert of the sea of Chín  
Upon the battle-day. A chief is there  
From Má wara 'u'n-Nahr; his head is raised  
O'er circling heaven; a hundred lions' strength  
Is his; he quelled mighty elephants!  
In height a cypress and in looks a moon,  
A potentate whose toys are crowns and thrones,  
Kámús, this chief of chiefs, will have his will  
Upon Gúdarz and Tús. The troops comprise  
All those that dwell 'twixt Sipanjáb and Rám.  
I reckon first the Khán of Chín, whose crown  
Is heaven, his throne the earth, next brave Manshúr,  
Whose falchion layeth warriors' heads in dust,  
And next Kámús, the swordsman of Kashán,  
Whose eyes ne'er saw defeat. His works all prosper;  
When he is wroth he bringeth blast and snow."

Pirán harangued the army of Turán,  
And said: "Ye chiefs and warriors of the king!  
Rejoice ye, young and old! at this good news,  
Sent by the king, and be ye bright of soul;  
Now must we wash the trouble from our hearts  
I will not leave Írán field, fell, or crop.  
The pains and troubles of the king are over  
In seeking vengeance and arraying troops,

V. 919

And ye shall see Afrásiyáb supreme  
By land and sea, at home and in Írán."

From those approaching powers fresh messengers  
Kept coming to the captain of the host  
With joyful news: "O famous paladin!  
Live glad and bright of soul for evermore.  
Be thy heart joyful to behold these kings,  
And may thy soul cease troubling. From Kashmír  
All, till thou comest to the river Shahd,  
Is elephants and litters, flags and troops,  
While from Sakláb Kundur the lion-man  
Is coming with that warring Heaven Beward  
Of Kát, with Garcha from Sagsár, Shangul  
From Hind. Flags fill the air and swords the earth.  
Chaghán hath sent Fartús, the Light of hosts,  
Gahán hath sent Gahár, who scorcheth heroes,  
With Shamírán of Shahn, first of the age,  
Who scattereth poison with his spear and sword.  
Now lift thy head and take thy pleasure here,  
For this glad news would make an old man young."

Pírán laughed out with all his heart and soul.  
Thou wouldst have said: "He that was dead reviveth!"  
Thus spake he to Húmán: "I will go forth  
To meet them. They have had a longsome march,  
Equipped for fight and full of care. They hold  
Their heads as high as doth Afrásiyáb,  
For they have treasure, lustre, throne, and state.  
I will go forth and see what men they are,  
How many, with what chiefs and warriors,  
Will do obeisance to the Khán of Chín,  
And kiss the ground before his throne withal:  
I will behold Kámús, the exalted one,  
And find Tús an opponent in Shangul.  
Returning hither I will gird myself  
To rob the Íránians of the breath of life,  
And, if they cannot hold their own, will make

Day dark and strait to them. I will secure  
 With heavy bonds about their feet and necks  
 Those that survive among the Íránian chiefs,  
 And then dispatch them to Afrásiyáb,  
 Not taking rest or sleep till it be done,  
 Behead the common soldiers that I capture,  
 Burn them, commit their ashes to the winds,  
 And take no thought about the place again.  
 Then will I part our army into three,  
 And darken the Íránian monarch's day.  
 I will dispatch one army unto Balkh,  
 And make day bitter to the Íránians,  
 Another to Kábulistán and bring  
 Kábul the ashes of Zábulistán,  
 And lead the third compact of mighty Turkmans  
 And Lions 'gainst Írin. I will spare none,  
 Not women, little children, young or old,  
 But overthrow Írán, both field and fell.  
 May not a hand or foot be left to them!  
 But till I order matters seek not fight."

Thus spake Pírán and went with wreakful heart;  
 Thou wouldst have said: "His very skin hath burst."  
 Húmán said to the troops: "Away with care!  
 For two days let us labour but to keep  
 Watch on Mount Hamáwan, for fear our foes  
 Steal off by night just when our flags will fill  
 Completely road, plain, valley, stream, and hill."

## § 19

*How the Khán of Chín came to Hamáwan*

Pírán on reaching his allies beheld  
 The plains and valleys full of horses' hoofs.  
 The tents and tent-enclosures filled the world  
 With red and yellow, blue and violet.

V. 921

Amidmost each enclosure was a standard  
 Wrought of brocade of Chin and painted silk.  
 He stood amazed and asked himself in wonder :—  
 " Is this a paradise, or banquet-hall,  
 The starry heaven, or orbit of the moon ? "

He came afoot and kissed the ground before  
 The Khán, who, seeing him, embraced him, marvelled  
 At such a chest and neck, much greeted him,  
 Made much of him, set him upon the throne,  
 And said : " Oh ! well is me that I should sit  
 In such good spirits by the paladin ! "

He then asked : " Of the army of Írán  
 Who hath the signet, and who hath the crown ?  
 What troops have they ? Who are their warriors,  
 And wherefore sit they on the mountain-top ? "

Pírán replied : " O monarch ! live for ever,  
 And may the Maker bless thee who hast joyed  
 Thy slave's heart with thy questions. Through thy  
 fortune

I am both well and happy, and my soul  
 Desireth but the dust upon thy feet.  
 The king inquireth of the Íránians :  
 They have no signet, diadem, or throne,  
 And, having longed for war beyond all measure,  
 Are left with only rocks to gaze upon ;  
 For foiled, dishonoured, and reduced in strength,  
 They went in full flight to Mount Hamáwan.  
 Their general is Tús, a man of valour,  
 Who feareth not a lion in the field.  
 Their chieftains are Gúdarz son of Kishwád,  
 Gív, and Ruhbám—all men of noble birth.  
 Now by the fortune of the illustrious Khán  
 This is the last host that their chief shall see.  
 They come not on the plain at battle-time,  
 And save the flinty rocks have naught to hand."

The Khán said : " Stay, and bring thy comrades too.

Content of heart to-day will we quaff wine,  
And not anticipate."

He decked the tents  
Like gardens in the spring: "'Tis Paradise,"  
Thou wouldst have said, "for colour and device."

§ 20

*How the Íránians took Counsel how to act*

Now when Sol mounted to the vault of heaven  
The hearts of Tús and of Gúdarz grew troubled:—  
"Why are the Turkmans still to-day? Are they  
At counsel or bemused? But be they sad  
Or glad I look for ill! Know that if aid  
Hath come to them ill hap hath come to us!  
Consider all the Íránian troops as slain  
Or, if still living, fleeing from the fight.  
If Rustam cometh not upon the field  
Disaster will befall us from yon host,  
And we shall have no sepulture, no grave,  
But horses' hoofs will trample on our heads!"

Giv said to Tús: "O general of the Sháh  
What aileth thee to think upon mishap?  
We need not look for ill; God is thy Helper;  
We are His worshippers, and have broadcast  
Much seed of good. Such fortune hath the Sháh,  
The lord of scimitar and throne and crown,  
That God will not withdraw His help from us,  
And leave our enemies to work their will.  
With Rustam's coming all our soldiers' cares  
Will end. Let no man cease to trust in God  
Though day should turn to night. Let not thy heart  
Be straitened needlessly because our foes  
Forbear to fight one day: they have not shut  
Heaven's door on us. Fear not the foe's designs.

V. 923

If God most high ordaineth loss for us  
 Quit vain imaginings for come it will.  
 Let us construct a trench before the host,  
 As warriors use, then draw the sword, provoke  
 A fight and slay our foes; we shall no doubt  
 Perceive their aims and lay their secret bare.  
 News from Írán will come and there will be  
 Light on the boughs of our tall Cypress-tree."

## § 21

*How Gúdarz had Tidings of the Coming of Rustam*

Gúdarz departed from the host and clomb  
 The mountain-summit. From the look-out came  
 A grievous cry: "The Íránian warriors  
 Are ruined now! As yon bright sun declined  
 The whole world eastward grew as dark as night  
 With dust, which standard-bearing elephants  
 Sent up, and through that dust the shining sun  
 Was lustreless!"

Gúdarz heard that and cried:—  
 "Dark earth is my sole hiding-place!"

His cheeks

Became as pitch, and like one arrow-pierced  
 He cried: "My share is ever strife and battle,  
 My lot ill-hap and bane for antidote.  
 I had a host of sons and grandsons, men  
 Reputed in the land, but all were slain  
 For Siyáwush, and all my luck hath gone!  
 I hope no more from life, my day is dark!  
 Would that my mother had not brought me forth,  
 High heaven ne'er turned o'er me!"

V. 924

To the watch

He said: "Long-sighted man and bright of mind!  
 Look forth upon the hosts and see who cometh.

Where is the banner of the Íránian chief?  
Look to our left and right."

The watchman answered:—

"I see no movement and reconnaissance  
On our side, but on theirs all is astir;  
Of us thou wouldest say: 'They are asleep.'"

Thereat the paladin shed bitter tears,  
And cried in sorrow: "Saddle me my steed,  
And for the future make my bed of brick!  
I go to fill mine eyes and arms once more,  
Embrace Shídúsh, Bízhan, Ruhhám, and Gív,  
Those brave, impetuous cavaliers, kiss each  
Farewell upon the cheek and shower tears."

His gallant bay was saddled when there came  
The watchman's shout: "Rejoice, world-paladin!  
And banish care, for on the road that leadeth  
Toward Írán a black, day-darkening dust  
Ariseth; many standards like the moon  
Are lifted from the centre of a host;  
The first one hath a wolf, a moon the next,  
The third a dragon with a lion's head  
In gold upon the staff!"

"Then live for ever,  
And may the evil eye be far from thee!"  
Gúdarz exclaimed. "When what thou utterest  
To such good purpose shall be brought to pass  
I will bestow on thee such varied treasures  
That thou shalt have no need to toil henceforth.  
Hereafter, when we go back to Írán,  
Some day, and to the monarch of the brave,  
I will forthwith present thee at his throne,  
And lift thy head above the nobles there.  
Now prithee leave thy look-out-post, approach  
Our generals, and tell what thou hast seen;  
Be quick; use whom thou wilt upon the road."

"I may not leave the look-out for the host,"

The watchman said, "but when 'tis grown so dark  
That I can see no longer I will carry,  
Like the Símurgh, the tidings to the troops  
Down from my station here."

The paladin  
Rejoined: "Be shrewd of heart and bright of soul.  
Look forth from this high mountain yet again,  
And see how soon they will be here."

He answered:—

"Yon host will reach Mount Hamáwan to-morrow  
At dawn."

The paladin conceived such joy  
As would have brought a corpse to life.

Pírán,

For his part, swift as flying dust-clouds led  
Those reinforcements<sup>1</sup> to the battlefield.  
A horseman went on first to tell at large  
The joyful news which when Húmán had heard  
He laughed and said: "Now surely sleepless fortune  
Is with us."

From the field a shout of joy  
Rose cloud-ward from the army of Túrán.  
The Íránian nobles full of care and pain,  
With faces sallow and with livid lips,  
Dispersed themselves upon the mountain-side  
To give their last instructions. Everywhere  
Groups gathered and bewailed themselves, and said:—  
"Woe for these warriors of royal race,  
Who are forgotten by the Íránians,  
For now the lions' maws will be their tombs,  
And earth be saturate with heroes' blood!"

The chief bespake Bizhan: "Arise, explore  
This secret, scale the mountain-top and mark  
The character and number of this host.  
See by what road they are approaching us,

<sup>1</sup> See §§ 18 and 19.

What camp-enclosures and what thrones they have."

Bízhān the son of Giv then went apart,  
And climbed the mountain's solitary peak,  
Saw flags and horsemen, elephants and troops  
On all sides, ran back to the general,  
With heart all pain and soul all care, and said :—  
"Earth's surface hath become like indigo,  
So many are the troops and elephants!  
The flags and spears pass count, the sun is dim  
In heaven with dust, the troops are countless, boundless,  
The ear is deafened by their kettledrums!"

Tús listened, sad at heart and face all tears,  
Then called to him the captains, sorely grieved  
About his men, and said: "Time showeth me  
Naught but the woes of war. I have experienced  
Full many a rise and fall, but never fear  
Like this. We have but one resource: although  
Our arms and troops are few we will get ready,  
Attack to-night, and make earth a Jihán  
With blood. If we shall perish in the fray  
There will be generals while there are kings:  
Men shall not say: 'He died ingloriously.'  
Although they have to lay me in the dust."

The leaders present all agreed thereto.  
Now when the face of earth became like pitch,  
When Venus, Mars, and Mercury were hidden,  
And when the moon rose from the Sign of Pisces,  
And to the navel rent the robe of night,  
The watchman with a face like sandarach  
Ran in to Tús and said: "O General!  
The Shah hath sent an army from Írán!"

The leader Tús laughed with the other chiefs,  
And said: "O men of name and warriors!  
We need not now seek fight since aid hath come,  
We have our times for haste and for delay.  
The elephantine hero by God's strength

Will come to our assistance with this host ;  
 Then on the Turkmans will we satisfy  
 Our lust, and our renown shall reach the sun."

They thought no more about a night-attack ;  
 The troops and leader joyed ; the watchman made  
 Their spirits bright again, and young and old  
 Told those glad tidings. Tús sent forth his scouts,  
 Shouts and the clang of bells rose from the mount,  
 And all the folk, grown happy and soul-bright,  
 Talked of the chief of paladins all night.

## § 22

*How the Khán of Chín went to reconnoitre the  
 Army of Írán*

Whenas the sun arrayed its host in heaven,  
 And black night disappeared, the Khán of Chín  
 Assembled the Túránian chiefs and warriors,  
 And thus addressed Pírán : " We will not fight  
 To-day, and we do need a day's repose,  
 But, while our proud chiefs and man-slaying horsemen  
 Rest from the travail of the tedious road,  
 And from their hurried march o'er hill and dale,  
 I will survey the Írinians—how they fare  
 Upon the field."

Pírán replied : " The Khán  
 Is a wise king and worshipful, so let him  
 Do what he will to-day for he is leader."

There rose a clamour from the camp-enclosure  
 With sounds of kettledrum and clarion.  
 They mounted seats upon five elephants,  
 Housed with brocade of Chín of turquoise hue,  
 And broïdered with gold thread. The seats themselves  
 Were gemmed with emeralds, the fittings golden,  
 The saddle-flaps were made of leopard-skin,

And golden were bells, gongs, and rattle-boxes.  
 The drivers' heads were decked with crowns, and all  
 Wore torques and ear-rings. With so many flags  
 Of painted silk the air was yellow, red,  
 And violet like some bázár in Chín.  
 The troops marched to the field as if to keep  
 A feast, the earth was beauteous as the eye  
 Of chanticleer with trappings, colours, drums,  
 And pipes. The kings set forth, the air was filled  
 With blare of clarions, the spearpoints gleamed,  
 The plain was black with troops. Tús from afar  
 Saw them and ranged in line what men he had,  
 The warriors of Írán girt up their loins,  
 And Gív brought Káwa's standard. From the plain  
 Of battle to the summit of the mount  
 The army of Írán stood troop on troop.

Now when Kámús went forward with Manshúr,  
 Bíward, Shangul the prescient, and the Khán  
 To view Mount Hamáwan, they never thought  
 To face a foe, but when the Khán afar  
 Looked forth and heard the Íránian horsemen's war-cry  
 It pleased him and he said: "Behold a host  
 Of men-o'erthrowing, warlike cavaliers!  
 Pírán the chieftain told us otherwise,  
 But brave men's qualities should not be hidden.  
 The chieftain masketh the pit's mouth with brambles,  
 And thither will his horse speed at the chase.  
 What better is it vainly to besmireh  
 The foemen's prowess on the day of fight?  
 I have not looked on cavaliers and chiefs  
 So stamped with chivalry and manliness."

"Men reckon not of so few," Pírán replied,  
 "Upon a field like this."

"But," said the Khán,  
 "What shall we do?"

Pírán said: "Thou hast fared

Far over hill and dale. Let us remain  
 Three days to rest the troops. I will divide  
 The host ; the day of fight and fear is over.  
 Half of our warlike, glorious cavaliers  
 Shall fall upon the foe from dawn till noon  
 With double-pointed dart, sword, bow, and mace ;  
 And then till night ariseth from the hills  
 The other half shall strive. At dark will I  
 Bring up the rested troops and press the foe ;  
 We will not let them have a moment's peace—  
 We and our eager cavaliers in arms."

Kámús replied : " Not good ! No such delay  
 For me ! With all these men and such strife toward  
 Why seek so long a respite ? Let us both  
 Attack and straiten dale and height for them.  
 Hence we will march upon Írán, will leave not  
 Throne, crown, or diadem, lay waste all fields  
 And fells, and act as warriors and Lions.  
 No women, little children, old or young,  
 No Sháh, or man of rank or paladin  
 Will I leave in Írán, no field or fell,  
 No hall or palace or four-footed beast.  
 Why should we pass so many evil days  
 To get but care and grief and needless pain ?  
 But ope not to our foes a door to-night  
 To get away. As soon as morning breatheth  
 The troops must move. I with the king of Hind  
 Will bear my flag up yonder height. To-morrow  
 Thou shalt behold a heap of corpses there  
 To make the Íránians weep that look thereon."

The Khán said to Pirán : " There is no course  
 Save this : he is a peerless general."

The nobles all agreed to what Kámús,  
 The conqueror of Lions, had proposed.  
 The conference being o'er they went their way,  
 And passed all night in ordering their array.

## § 23

*How Fariburz reached Mount Hamáwan*

Whenas the sun had pitched a camp-enclosure  
Of gold brocade upon the azure realm  
A loud cry from the look-out reached Gúdarz:—  
“O captain of the host! the troops have come!  
They are at hand! Their dust hath dimmed the day!”

Gúdarz sprang up, had his swift charger brought,  
And rode toward that dark dust with anxious heart.  
He came. When near to them he spied the flag  
Of Fariburz the chief, who led the van,  
The well approved and the new Sháh's kinsman.<sup>1</sup>  
Then old Gúdarz alighted as withal<sup>2</sup>

V. 931

Did Fariburz the wise, the army's Lustre,  
The twain embraced. Gúdarz wept tears of blood  
Upon his breast. “Old chief,” said Fariburz,  
“Still forced to fight! revenge for Siyáwush  
Hath cost thee dear! Alas! those cavaliers  
Gúdarzian! May much good news of them  
Still reach thee, may the fortune of the foe  
Be over-turned! Praise to the Lord of sun  
And moon that I have seen thee safe and sound.”

Gúdarz wept blood for those that slept in dust.  
“Observe,” he made reply, “how evil fortune  
Is ever bringing evil on my head!  
No son or grandson hath survived this strife,  
No soldiers, flags, and kettledrums are left!  
But I dismiss all thought of conflicts past;  
Now is the time for fighting and emprise.  
The troops on plain and dale have made earth like  
A raven's wing, so many are they, and all  
The host of Tús is as the one black hair

<sup>1</sup> With a slight change of reading.

<sup>2</sup> Reading with P.

Upon a white bull by comparison !  
 The wastes and settlements of Chín, Sakláb,  
 Of Rúm and Hind, can have no creature left !  
 All must have girt themselves to fight with us !  
 But till thou tellest me where Rustam is  
 My back will not be straightened from its griefs."

"He is behind me," Fariburz replied,  
 "Intent on war. All through the night till dawn  
 He marcheth with all speed. Now where shall I  
 Encamp and whither lead this little band ?"

Gúdarz made answer : "What did Rustam say ?  
 His words should be reported."

Fariburz

V. 932

Replied : "Illustrious one ! the peerless Rustam  
 Bade us not fight. 'Stay on the field,' he said.  
 'Ye must not show yourselves before the host,  
 But take your ease until my flag appeareth.'"

Then Fariburz, Gúdarz in company,  
 Marched toward Mount Hamáwan right speedily.

## § 24

### *How Pírán took Counsel with the Khán of Chín*

When from his look-out the Túránian watch  
 Espied these troops he went back to the host.  
 "Gird all your loins for fight," he told Pírán,  
 "For from Írán an army hath arrived,  
 Advancing o'er the plain !"

The general

Went to the Khán of Chín, and said : "An army  
 Is coming from Írán, how great I know not,  
 Or who the leader is. What shall we do ?"

Kámús said : "Keep thyself to thine own force.  
 Thou hast the warriors of Afrásiyáb—  
 An army like the waters of the sea—

Yet what hast thou accomplished in five months  
 Against a foe so small? Now that the earth  
 Is full of troops led by the Khán, Manshúr,  
 And me, let us display our prowess; thou  
 Hast locked the door but we will bring the key.  
 Although the world's face be as silk of Chín  
 With soldiers from Kábul, Zábul, and Hind,  
 Yet, should I fight alone, the Íránians  
 Were nothing. Thou wilt say of them: 'They are  
 not.'

Thou wouldest scare me with illustrious Rustam;  
 Him will I slaughter first; if once I catch him  
 His name shall not be talked of any more.  
 Thou art oppressed and fearful of this host  
 Approaching from Sístán, but once behold  
 My hand in battle, when the dust-cloud riseth  
 Upon the plain, and thou wilt recognise  
 A hero in the world, what brave men are,  
 And what fight is."

V. 933

Pírán said: "Live for ever!  
 May evil's hand be always far from thee.  
 Enough! may what thou sayest be fulfilled,  
 And no one prove thine equal."

Said the Khán:—

"Thou hast allowed Kámús to lead the attack;  
 He will perform his word, for he hath Mountains  
 As his allies and Elephants for mates.  
 Daunt not the troops, for these Íránians  
 Are no great matter, and I will not leave  
 One noble in Írán, but send up dust  
 From hill and vale; as for the men of worship,  
 I will dispatch them to Afrásiyáb  
 In heavy fetters and behead the rest.  
 We will not leave Írán a leaf, a tree,  
 A Sháh, a palace or a crown or throne."

Pírán with smiles did reverence to the chiefs,

And to the Khán of Chín, then went rejoicing  
 Back to the camp, where all the nobles sought him,  
 Such as Húmán, Lahhák, and Farshidward—  
 Great men and Lions on the day of battle.  
 "A host," they said, "arriveth from Írán,  
 Led by a sable flag; a noted scout  
 Went forth to spy and is but now returned.  
 They say 'tis Fariburz son of Káuś,  
 A noble, loyal soldier."

Said Pírán :—

"Let us dismiss our cares. In Rustam's absence  
 We need not be afraid of Fariburz;  
 His breath is no cure for a bane like this.  
 But though according to Kámús indeed  
 The elephantine Rustam is no man  
 In war, God grant he come not though Kámús  
 Be such a Crocodile!"

Húmán replied :—

"Why dost thou keep thy spirit dark with care?  
 This is not he, or army from Sístán:  
 Here are the blood and dust of Fariburz."

Pírán said: "I have given up the throne  
 And state in dudgeon with the sun and moon,  
 For when I heard that from Írán a host  
 Marched, and was coming to this battlefield,  
 My brain went, anguish filled my soul and head,  
 And from my heart I drew a chilly sigh."

Kulbád said: "Why this grief? What need is there  
 To weep because of Rustam or of Tús?  
 With all our soldiers, maces, elephants,  
 And scimitars we block the wind itself.  
 Why fear then Rustam, Tús, and Kai Khusráu?  
 What are the Íránians but as dust to us?  
 They were dispersed in flight from yonder field,  
 And straggled to their tents."

Anon Tús heard :—

"The land is full of beat of kettledrum,  
And elephantine Rustam hath arrived  
With Fariburz and soldiers from Írán."

He bade bring forth the drums, Mount Hamáwan,  
Wherefrom shouts rose, grew ebon with dark dust,  
And earth shook underneath the trampling steeds.  
Then Tús harangued the troops, he spake at large  
About Mázandarán, what Rustam did  
In battle with the dívs, and how he triumphed.  
The soldiers called down blessings on their chief,  
They said: "Be ware of heart and bright of mind.  
We may pour out our souls at this good news,  
Which easeth them. When peerless Rustam cometh  
Yon host will not withstand the Crocodile.  
Then will we battle on this mount forthwith  
To cast this shame off from the Íránians.  
The standard of the illustrious Khán, the crown,  
The golden shields, and throne of ivory,  
His elephant-attendants' crowns of gold,  
Their golden girdles and their golden torques,  
Their golden cymbals and their golden bells,  
Unmatched on earth, his jewelled parasol  
Of peacocks' tails, these will we seize, and more,  
When we are fighting with our lives at stake."

V. 935

Tús said: "We are exposed to fear and blame;  
Our foes surround the mount, our nobles' heads  
Are snared. When Rustam cometh he will speak  
Upbraidingly, not asking what hath chanced,  
And say: 'Thou wast a bird caught in a net;  
The cause was sodden but the fight was raw.  
As with the general so with the host  
I have not seen one eager for the fray!'  
So let us charge like lions, and the foe  
May yet be shifted on this side the mount."

The troops replied to him: "Soar not so high.  
Refrain from words like these, let none advance

Till Rustam hath surveyed the scene of strife.  
 We will make prayer to God, the Guide to good.  
 By His command, Who holdeth sun and moon,  
 The matchless Rustam will approach this field.  
 Why have disaster for thy star? Bestow  
 Dínárs and drachms upon the poor."

The troops

Raised shouts of joy upon the mountain-top  
 As merrily they sought their place of rest,  
 Each man to spend the night as seemed him best.

### § 25

*How Gís and Tús fought with Kámús*

V. 936

When Sol laid hand on Taurus, and the larks  
 Began to carol o'er the plain, a shout  
 Ascended from the encampment of Kámús,  
 That man-o'erthrowing chief who led the van.  
 He massed his troops and gave out mail; his heart  
 Was full of fight, his head of vapouring.  
 He changed his robe for armour, donned a helm  
 Instead of crown, a breastplate for a tunic,  
 And chose troops panoplied in steel and iron.

The armies' dust began to show itself,  
 Men could not see their way for scimitars  
 And coats of mail. Then from the Íránian look-out  
 A shout rose: "On our side a host hath come;  
 The standard of the elephantine chief  
 Is visible behind it. On the other<sup>1</sup>  
 Túránian troops have clouded all the air.  
 Their leader is a horseman like a rock,  
 And earth is shaken by his charger's hoofs.  
 His mace's head is like a buffalo's;  
 Troops follow him and spearmen lead the way.

<sup>1</sup> Reading with P.

Thou well mayst muse at one that shouldereth  
A mace like that !"

On his side Tús sent up  
The drum-roll to the clouds, he heard the watchman,  
His soul grew bright, he joyed, while from Gúdarz  
A horseman sped to Fariburz to say :—  
"The army of Túrán arrayed for battle  
Is near at hand. They must not in full force  
Assail us scattered thus and overthrow us.  
Act as thy nature biddeth, for thou art  
A noble and Sháh's son. The dust of Rustam  
Is rising from the road, and he is entering  
The field."

Then Fariburz joined force with Tús  
And Gív. They ranged the host on Hamáwan,  
And raised the glorious flag. All being ready,  
Right, left, and centre, rear and baggage-train,  
The clarions blared and all the host came on  
As 'twere the starry sky ; so when Kámús  
Advanced to fight he had no need to wait,  
But, like a river speeding down a height,  
Led on his troops and fronted Hamáwan.  
Air was like indigo and earth was hidden.  
When he was near he faced toward the mount,  
And with his cheeks all smiles addressed his powers :—  
"It is a coward's business to oppose  
The Íránians, yet a vast, brave host is here  
And not Pírán, Húmán, and all that crew !  
What champion have they to contend with me ?"

Then shouting to Mount Hamáwan he cried :—  
"Ye lion-men upon the day of battle !  
Behold my breast, my stature, and my bearing,  
This arm of mine, this sword and mace !"

Then Gív,

On hearing, flared up, raged, and drew his sword,  
But said, when he drew nearer to Kámús :—

"None but a furious elephant can match him!"

V. 938

He took and strung his bow, he called on God,  
The Giver of all good, and showered arrows  
From bow like clouds in spring upon Kámús,  
Who, when he marked Gív's mastery, concealed  
His own head 'neath his shield, and with his lance  
Charged wolf-like. Air was full of dust, and earth  
Of death. On drawing near his foe he speared  
Gív's waist, who reeled and, as he reeled, Kámús  
Plucked out his own sword, shouted, raged, proclaimed  
His name, came grimly on the cavalier,  
And clave his lance obliquely like a pen.

Tús from the centre saw the fight with grief,  
And thought: "Gív is not man enough; I only  
Can wield a spear like that."

He left the centre  
With shouts to succour Gív and join the fray.  
Kámús wheeled, rode between the chiefs, and struck  
The steed of Tús a sword-blow on the neck;  
That prince's face became like ebony.  
The charger fell, the gallant rider rose;  
Then like a roaring lion took his stand,  
And on the battlefield with spear afoot  
Contended with Kámús before the hosts.  
Two noble warriors fought one cavalier;  
He of Kashán was still insatiate!  
Thus, till the sun's place darkened, all the field  
Was in confusion and, when it grew ebon,  
Kámús and Tús gave o'er. The hosts again  
Went to their several camps on mount and plain.

## § 26

### *The Coming of Rustam*

Now when heaven's sphere grew void of sun and moon,  
And when the scouts came forth from both the hosts,

The watcher in the look-out loosed his tongue :—  
 " The plain is full of dust, the night is dark,  
 The level and the upland ring with cries,  
 And there are many lights among the troops.  
 Good sooth! the elephantine chief hath come,  
 And with an army from Zabul."

V. 939

Gúdarz,

On hearing this, descended mid the murk  
 The rocks in haste, the dragon-standard shone  
 Though night was dark and earth was violet-dim.  
 He lighted from his steed, while Rustam too  
 Alighted and advanced like rushing wind.  
 The twain embraced and from them both arose  
 A bitter cry o'er those Gúdarzian chiefs,  
 And that gain-seeking which had proved a loss.  
 Gúdarz said: " Brave, wise, ardent paladin!  
 Both crown and throne receive their light from  
 thee,

And what thou utterest is truth indeed.  
 More art thou to the Iránians than father  
 And mother, treasure, throne, and precious stones.  
 Without thee we are fish on land, our heads  
 Are petrified, our bodies in the grave.  
 When I observed thy goodly countenance,  
 Thine eager salutations and thy love,  
 I grieved no longer for the dear ones gone;  
 Through thy good fortune only smiles remained."

Then Rustam answered him: " Be glad of heart,  
 And very heedful of thy noble self,  
 Because the world is but deceit and toil,  
 It showeth thee its wealth and that is all.  
 One man is rich, another poor; this man  
 Is honoured, that despised, but all must go.  
 There is no remedy; I know no worse |  
 Calamity than death, but may that pang  
 Afflict not thee, and may we all die fighting."

V. 940

When Tús, Gív, and those valiant warriors,  
 The Íránian cavaliers, had heard the news  
 Of Rustam's coming to Mount Hamáwan,  
 And being seen by veteran Gúdarz,  
 They went like wind, shouts rose, and clarions blared.  
 The soldiers and the chiefs approached afoot,  
 Their loins were girded but their hearts at ease.  
 They raised a cry of anguish for those slaughtered  
 Amid the dust of fight; the heart of Rustam  
 Was moved; he girt himself anew for vengeance;  
 Then, hearing what had chanced in that campaign,  
 Lamented all the sufferings of the troops,  
 And gave much counsel, saying: "Ye chiefs! to-day  
 A grave strife faceth us, and war's result  
 Is feast to one and funeral to another."

That warrior, that Lustre of the world,  
 Set up his camp-enclosure while his powers  
 Encamped behind him on Mount Hamáwan,  
 And raised their leader's standard. Mighty Rustam  
 Sat on the throne and all the chiefs assembled.  
 Here sat Gúdarz and Gív, there Tús and others,  
 While Rustam, with a lamp in front of him,  
 Discoursed at large of matters great and small,  
 How chiefs and troops had fought, and whether now  
 Bright sun and shining moon would favour them.  
 The chiefs spake to the gallant paladin  
 Of that innumerable host of foes,  
 Spake of Kámús, Shangul, the Khán of Chín,  
 Manshúr, and of the warriors of Túrán:—  
 "About Kámús himself we cannot speak,  
 For we have had no means of seeing him.<sup>1</sup>  
 He is a Tree whose Fruits are mace and sword,  
 And, though the clouds rained stones upon his head,  
 He would not flee from elephants of war:  
 His head is full of wreak, his heart of strife.

<sup>1</sup> "Car nous n'osons pas le regarder" (Mohl).

Earth is not able to contain Manshûr;  
 No warrior ordereth a host like him;  
 And from this mountain to the river Shahd  
 Stretch flags and litters, elephants and troops,  
 Whose helmets and cuirasses pass compute.  
 Grim are the looks of all upon the plain,  
 Which is a mass of tents, around are pitched  
 The tent-enclosures of brocade of Chfn,  
 And had the captain and the host not come  
 All had been lost. Praise to the Lord of victory,  
 Who thus hath put a period to our stress!  
 Past doubt we live through thee: we all despaired  
 Of respite."

For a while the paladin  
 Grieved for the slain, wept, and grew dark of soul,  
 Then said: "Look from the orbit of the moon  
 Down to the gloomy face of sombre earth;  
 All is distress and anguish, care and toil.  
 Such is the manner of this Wayside Inn,  
 Such is the manner of the circling sky—  
 Whiles strife and poison, and whiles sweets and love!  
 We die by nature or by violence;  
 'Tis better not to mark the why and how,  
 For all must go as soon as time is up.  
 Blame not the circling of the sky. Now may  
 The all-victorious World-lord be our aid,  
 And may our foemen's fortunes be o'erthrown.  
 Henceforward we will take our full revenge,  
 And rid the world of foes."

V. 942

The mighty men  
 Praised him and said: "Live ever famed and glad  
 With signet, crown, and sword, and never be  
 The court of Kai Khusrâu bereaved of thee."

## § 27

*How the Íránians and Túrnmians arrayed their Hosts*

When o'er the hills the world-illumer shone,  
 When day seized on the two dark curls of night,  
 And, having cast aside its pitchy weeds,  
 Bit with its teeth the moon's lips till they bled,  
 The sound of drums rose from the camp-enclosures,  
 The warriors came forth. Húmán the chieftain  
 Went out to reconnoitre every side,  
 And thought: "What reinforcement have the Íránians  
 To need those tents and those pavilions?"

He saw a camp-enclosure of brocade  
 Of turquoise hue with many slaves about,  
 And in its front a general's flag and spear:  
 It seemed to him that fortune had changed sides.  
 He saw another army's camp-enclosure  
 With flags as bright as moons, for Faríburz,  
 Son of Káuś, with elephants and drums  
 Had pitched near Tús. Húmán in deep concern  
 Went to Pírán and said: "To-day is wedded  
 To heavy toil. The Íránians' cries and clamour  
 Were greater yesternight than heretofore;  
 So went I forth alone from camp at dawn,  
 And viewed the foe on all sides. From Írán  
 A mighty host hath come to succour them.  
 Now one pavilion is of green brocade;  
 Its standard hath a dragon for device,  
 And soldiers from Zábul are round about  
 With bucklers and with falchions of Kábul.  
 I think that Rustam, sent forth by the Sháh,  
 Hath come with reinforcements to the field."

Pírán made answer: "'Tis an evil time!  
 If Rustam taketh part in this campaign  
 He will not spare Kámús, the Khán of Chín,

Shangul or any warrior of Túrán."

With that he left the camp and going forth  
Observed the forces of the foe, and thence  
Came hurrying to Kámús, came to Manshúr  
And to Fartús, and said: "I went this morn,  
And made the circuit of the Íránian host.  
Great reinforcements have arrived and chiefs  
Both numerous and eager for the fray.  
Methinketh too that elephantine Rustam,  
Of whom I spake before the company,  
Hath come to succour them, all bent on vengeance,  
Straight from the Sháh."

"O wise one!" said Kámús.

"Thy heart produceth naught but ill surmise.  
Know thou that Kai Khusráu hath come to war,  
But do not therefore vex thy heart in vain.  
Why harp so much on Rustam? Name no more  
Zábulistán. If he beholdeth me  
With flag in hand his heart will mourn at sight.  
Go thou, array the host, lead forth the troops,  
And bring the standards to the battlefield.  
When I go forth to combat with the host  
Ye must not loiter. Now shalt thou behold  
The combating of men. The wilderness  
Shall be a sea of blood."

The paladin

V. 944

Rejoiced to hear and ceased to fret at Rustam.  
He came with joyful heart and resolute,  
And bathed his spirit in the stream of valour.  
He gave out helms and mail to all the troops,  
And kept in mind the language of Kámús,  
Then going to the Khán he kissed the ground,  
And said to him: "O monarch, live for ever!  
May wisdom feed upon thy thoughts. The way  
That thou hast trod was long and difficult;  
Thou boughtest toil, foregoing feasts for us,

And to do reverence to Afrásiyáb  
Hast crossed the sea.<sup>1</sup> Our soldiers' backs are straight-  
ened

By thee. Now act as native worth requireth,  
Bedeck the elephants with bells and gongs,  
And stun the world with blare of clarions.  
To-day I make the attack; do thou remain  
At the army's centre with the elephants  
And kettledrums, keep guard upon my rear.  
And help to raise my helmet to the clouds.  
Kámús said thus to me: 'Lead thou the van,'  
And brandishing his mace swore many oaths,  
And said: 'I will not fight save with this mace  
To-day though stones should shower from the clouds.' "

The Khán on hearing bade the clarions sound:  
Thou wouldst have said: "The very dust hath feet!"  
Both earth and heaven shook at the tymbal-din,  
And put all love away. He gave command  
To set a litter on an elephant,  
And earth's face seemed like indigo. He reached  
In state the army's centre, and the sky  
Was like a dark cloud with the flying dust.  
There was a sound of gongs and Indian bells,  
And thou hadst said: "Men's hearts are in their  
mouths!"

V. 945

The many turquoise thrones upon the backs  
Of elephants and that blue sea of flags  
Took all the lustre from the eyes of men,  
And none possessed his soul in quietude.  
Dust filled the eyes and gullet of the sky:  
Thou wouldst have said: "Its face is smeared with  
pitch!"

Now when the Khán had reached the army's centre  
The moon went erring from its way in heaven.  
The right led by Kámús was like a mountain;

<sup>1</sup> "la mer de la Chine" (Mohl).

They took the baggage-train toward the waste.  
 Pírán went toward the left wing, and with him  
 There went Húmán his brother and Kulbád.  
 When Rustam saw the movements of the Khán  
 He too arrayed his troops, bade Tús bind on  
 The drums and dress the army like the eye  
 Of chanticleer. He said : " We shall behold  
 O'er whom the heaven turneth in its love,  
 What are the revolutions of the sky,  
 And which of these great men hath lived his time.  
 I loitered not, Rakhsh made three stages one,  
 But now his hoofs are tired ; he is o'erwrought  
 By march and toil. I dare not tax his strength  
 By going forth myself as challenger ;  
 Assist me then to-day and work your will  
 Upon the foe."

The captain of the host  
 Struck up the fíes and drums ; the war-cry rose,  
 And trumpet-blare. Gúdarz drew up the right,  
 And sent the baggage to Mount Hamáwan,  
 While Fariburz arrayed the left ; the world  
 Seemed all a reed-bed ! At the army's centre  
 Was Tús son of Naudar. Earth was all dust,  
 And air all storm, so that the world was hidden ;  
 The warriors could not even see themselves !

V. 946

The mighty Rustam climbed the heights to view  
 The Khán and army of Túrán ; he saw  
 A host so mighty that the sea of Rúm  
 Seemed but a lump of wax compared to them !  
 The troops were from Kashán and Shahn and Wahr,  
 With divers coats of mail and divers helms,  
 Troops from Chaghán and Chín, Sakláb and Hind,  
 Gahán and Rúm, Sind and the Indus-banks.<sup>1</sup>  
 In every quarter there were alien tongues,  
 Strange flags and meats ! What with the elephants,

<sup>1</sup> So Mohl.

The adornments of the thrones of ivory,  
 The armlets and tiaras, torques and crowns,  
 The world was like the garth of Paradise—  
 A goodly but terrific spectacle!  
 He stood astonished on the height and thought:—  
 "When will the sky show love to us again?  
 What will the next jest of old heaven be?"

He gat down from the mount but lost not heart,  
 Went not before the army and its chief,  
 But said: "Since first I girt me ne'er have I  
 Dwelt anywhere a year, and I have seen  
 Full many a host, but greater never saw."

He bade advance the drums, and Tís the general  
 Marched from the mountain to the plain to battle,  
 Prepared to dip his wreakful spear in blood.  
 They marched till noon, then ranked them two leagues  
 long,

V. 947

The daylight vanished in the army's dust,  
 The sun divided not 'twixt night and day,  
 The air was dark with spears and javelins,  
 The sun became confounded, and the din  
 Of horsemen and of horses on the plain  
 Rose over Mars and Saturn. Rocks of flint  
 Fled at the horsemen's shouts and crash of axes,  
 Both sword and forearm reddened o'er with blood,  
 The ground groaned underneath the horses' shoes:  
 The body of the coward lost all heart,  
 While brave men turned their mail to winding-sheets.  
 Kámús addressed the host: "Since we must tread  
 The sky to-day, bring all your lassos, maces,  
 And swords upon this glorious battlefield.  
 The aspirant's head beneath the stones will lie  
 Unless he quit himself with valiancy."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> More literally, "take his life in hand."

## § 28

*How Rustam fought with Ashkabús*

A warrior named Ashkabús, whose voice  
 Was like a kettledrum's, came forth to challenge  
 The Írániáns, bent to lay some foeman's head  
 In dust. He cried: "Which of you famous men  
 Will come to fight with me, that I may make  
 His blood to flow in streams?"

Ruhhám on hearing

V. 948

Sent up his battle-cry, stormed like the sea,  
 Took up his bow—the horseman's ambushade—  
 And showered arrows on that famous chief,  
 But he was clad in panoply of steel,  
 And arrows were like wind upon his tunic.  
 Ruhhám then raised his massive mace. The hands  
 Of both grew weary, but Ruhhám's mace failed  
 Upon the other's helm, much as he sought  
 To deal a fatal blow, till Ashkabús,  
 His heavy mace in hand, while earth seemed iron  
 And heaven ebony, smote brave Ruhhám  
 Upon the helm and smashed it, who thus worsted  
 Wheeled round and sought the heights. 'Tis at the  
 centre

Raged and spurred forth to go at Ashkabús,  
 But matchless Rustam said to him in wrath:—  
 "Ruhhám's fit comrade is a bowl of wine.  
 He holdeth swords as playthings in his cups,  
 And vaunteth of himself among the brave;  
 Now whither hath he gone, who was a match  
 For Ashkabús, with cheeks like sandarach?  
 Keep in the army's centre—thy fit place—  
 And I will fight afoot."

He slung his bow  
 Upon his arm, stuck arrows in his belt,

And shouted, saying : " O thou man of war !  
Thine adversary cometh : go not back."

He of Kashán laughed in astonishment,  
Then checked his steed and, calling to his foe,  
Said, laughing still, to him : " What is thy name,  
And who will mourn thee when thy head is off?"

V. 949

The peerless Rustam answered : " Hapless one !  
Why askest thou my name among the folk ?  
My mother called me by this name—' Thy death !'  
Fate made me for the hammer of thy helm."

He of Kashán replied : " Without a horse  
Thou givest up thyself to slaughtering !"

Then peerless Rustam : " Senseless challenger !  
Hast thou ne'er seen foot-soldiers lay proud heads  
Beneath the stones ? Do lions, crocodiles,  
And leopards fight on horseback in thy country ?  
Now I, foot-soldier as I am, will teach  
Thee how to fight, O mounted warrior !  
Tis for this purpose sent me forth afoot  
That I might get a horse from Ashkabús.  
He of Kashán like me will foot it then,  
And all will laugh at him. Afoot one man  
Is worth three hundred cavaliers like thee  
Upon this plain, this day, and in this fight."

He of Kashán inquired : " Where are thine arms ?  
I see not aught but mockery and jests."

Quoth Rustam : " Thou shalt see the bow and arrows  
Whereby thy life shall end."

He marked the pride  
Of Ashkabús in his fine steed, and shot  
An arrow at its breast ; the charger fell  
Headforemost. Rustam laughed and cried aloud :—  
" Sit by thy noble comrade ! Prithee nurse  
Its head and rest thee from the fight awhile."

V. 950

Then Ashkabús, his body quivering,  
His face like sandarach, strung up his bow,

And showered shafts on Rustam, who exclaimed :—

"In vain thou weariest thy wicked soul,

Thine arms, and body."

Choosing from his girdle

A shaft of poplar wood he drew it forth

Bright-pointed, feathered with four eagle-plumes ;

Then took his bow of Chách in hand and set

His thumbstall to the deer-hide string ; he straightened

His left arm, curved his right ; the bent bow sang ;

The shaft's point reached his ear ; the deer-hide

hummed ;

The shaft's point busied his finger and its notch

Was at his back ; he loosed and struck the breast

Of Ashkabús ; the sky kissed Rustam's hand ;

Then destiny cried : "Take !" and fate cried : "Give !"

The heavens cried : "Excellent !" the angels : "Good !"

He of Kashán expired, thou wouldst have said :—

"His mother never bare him !"

Both the hosts

Beheld that fight. Kámús marked with the Khán

The lofty stature, strength, and fire of Rustam,

And, when he had withdrawn, the Khán dispatched

A cavalier, who drew the arrow forth

All bloody to the plumes ! They passed it round

And thought it was a spear ! The Khán's heart aged

When he beheld the feathers and the point.

He spake thus to Pírán : "Who is this man ?

What is his name among the Íránian chiefs ?

'They are a paltry remnant,' were thy words,

'Not on a par with men of high degree,'

Whereas their arrows are like spears ! A mountain

Hath little heart to fight them ; thou didst make

The matter small indeed, but thine account

Was false throughout !"

"None know I of this class,"

Pírán replied, "within the Íránian host,

None who can send his arrows through a tree-trunk,  
 Nor know I what this miscreant's aims may be.  
 The men possessed of stature, Grace, and prowess  
 Among the Íránian host are Tús and Gív,  
 And in the fight Húmán hath often made  
 The world as black as ebony to Tús.  
 I know not who is this Íránian,  
 Or who among our troops will prove his match;  
 But I will go and ask among the tents;  
 We will make out his name at all events."

## § 29

*How Pírán held converse concerning the Coming of Rustam*

Pírán went full of care and pale of face  
 To ask the chiefs. Húmán the valiant said:—  
 "Wise men do not depreciate their foes.  
 The nobles of Írán are in good heart;  
 'They would break iron,' thou may'st say; and now  
 That reinforcements reach them from Írán  
 They raise their war-cry on the battlefield."

Pírán replied: "Whatever cavalier  
 Shall come forth from Írán to succour Tús  
 We need not fear if Rustam be away.  
 I shall not break my heart about Ruhhám  
 Or yet about Gurgín; for be assured  
 That saving Tús they have no warrior;  
 Gurgín and Fariburz match not Kámús.  
 Each soldier of our host too, with so great  
 A fight in view, will seek his own renown."

Thence sped he to Kámús, went to Manshúr  
 And to Fartús, and said: "To-day was fought  
 A great fight and a Wolf showed 'mongst the Sheep!  
 See to the cure and who hath shown himself  
 So harmful in the infliction of these wounds."

Kámús replied : " Our fight to-day was such  
 That fame was turned to shame since Ashkabús  
 Was slain therein while Gív and Tús rejoiced.  
 My heart was riven at this man on foot  
 Because our troops were panic-stricken at him.  
 He is the tallest man on earth, we have not  
 One in the host to fight him. Thou didst see  
 His bow ; the shaft is here. A savage lion  
 Hath not his strength ; he surely is the warrior,  
 The man of Sigz, of whom thou spakest oft,  
 And he hath come upon the field afoot,  
 Come to give succour to the Íránian host."

Pírán replied : " He is not like this one,  
 But an exalted cavalier and hero."

Kámús, whose wary heart was all intent  
 Upon the matter, said : " Describe to me  
 How fareth on the field that lion-man.  
 What knowledge hast thou of his height and strength ?  
 What language holdeth he with chiefs in fight ?  
 What sort of man is he, and what his aspect ?  
 On what wise shall I go to combat with him,  
 For if he be the one that hath arrived  
 I take the field myself ! "

Pírán replied :—

" Forbid it, heaven ! that Rustam should come hither,  
 And purpose fight ! Thou wouldest see a hero,  
 Tall as a cypress, and with Grace and beauty,  
 From whom Afrásiyáb on many a field  
 Hath turned with tears ; a warrior-liege is he,  
 The first to draw the scimitar, and fighteth  
 In wreak for Siyáwush his foster-child.  
 No one can wield his arms though many try.  
 In battle, when he girdeth up his loins,  
 His body hath a savage lion's strength.  
 No crocodile can lift his mace when dropped  
 In fight ; his bow-string is of lion-hide ;

His arrows, shaft and point, weigh ten sitír,  
 If any flint-rock should encounter him  
 'Twould turn to wax or something softer still.  
 He weareth, when he goeth forth to battle,  
 Chain-mail, and buckleth o'er it his cuirass,  
 And over that a garb of leopard-skin.  
 'Babr-i-Bayán' he calleth it; 'tis more  
 Than tunic and cuirass to him, not burning  
 With fire and wetting not with water. He  
 Hath wings when wearing it. The steed whereon  
 He rideth is, thou wouldst say, Mount Bistún  
 In motion, ever neighing in the fight,  
 And making sparks fly out of dust and stone;  
 But, wondrous as he is, it well may be  
 That thou wilt hold him not a man in battle,  
 And 'tis not strange that thou art worshipful  
 Who hast such limbs and shoulders, neck and arms."

Whenas Kámús, the man so prudent, heard  
 He gave his eyes and ears up to Pírán,  
 Whose words in sooth proved grateful. All afire  
 He answered: "Paladin! be shrewd of heart  
 And bright of mind. Propose what oaths thou wilt—  
 Oaths such as kings of wakeful fortune take—  
 And I will swear a greater oath to thee,  
 One that will cheer thy wounded heart, that I,  
 In His strength Who is Master of the sun,  
 Will not take off the saddle from my steed  
 Till I have made thy spirit glad and bright,  
 And this world as a needle's eye to them."

Pírán called many blessings down on him,  
 And said: "Shrewd-hearted king who sayest sooth!  
 We are in all things subject to thy will,  
 Which leaveth little of the fray to us."

Pírán then went the circuit of the host,  
 And, visiting the enclosures and the tents,  
 Apprised the Khán and all of these events.

## § 30

*How the Iránians and Túránians set the Battle in Array*

Whenas the air glowed with the setting sun,  
 And dark night 'gan to stalk athwart the sky,  
 The warriors of the army of Túrán,  
 The men of wisdom and the scimitar,  
 Came in a body to the Khán's pavilion,  
 Full of revenge and fight—the lion-man  
 Kámús, the conqueror of elephants,  
 Manshúr the brave, the arbiter of battle,  
 With Shamírán from Shahn, Shangul from Hind,  
 The king of Sind and from Sakláb Kundur.  
 They all advised at large about the war,  
 And spake much of Írán, till all agreed  
 That they must wash their hands in blood, then parted,  
 Each to his tent, for rest or pleasure there ;  
 But when the moon, then slender grown and humped,  
 Left the dark chevelure of gloomy night,  
 And, being in the presence of the sun,  
 Arose with watery looks and bathed its cheeks,  
 The soldiers of both hosts began to stir,  
 And, as their shouts arose, the Khán of Chín  
 Exclaimed : " We must not hesitate to fight  
 As yesterday we did and had to deem  
 Pírán—the man most needful—non-existent.  
 Far have we marched with succours to this war,  
 And if we slack to-day as yesterday  
 We shall disgrace our name for manliness.  
 To-morrow too Afrásiyáb will praise us,  
 And we may rest. Attack we then in force,  
 And mountain-like advance against our foes ;  
 The nobles of ten provinces are here,  
 We must not sleep or feast."

V. 955

The mighty men

Arose and said: "The conduct of the host  
Is thine to-day. Thine are the realms of Chin  
And of the Turkímans. Mark thou here to-day  
How scimitars shall shower from darksome clouds!"

On his side Rustain thus harangued the troops:—  
"The time hath come; if we have lost a few  
There is but one in several hundred slain;  
Let not your hearts be straitened; for my part  
I will not live except with fame and honour.  
With cheeks like ebony the Turkíman troops  
Withdrew from Ashkabús, so fill ye, all!  
Your hearts with vengeance, frown, ye cavaliers!  
For I have put the shoes on Rakhsh to-day,  
And on him will incarnadine my sword.  
Be instant for to-day we start afresh,  
And all the earth is now the treasury  
Of Kai Khusrau. Arm for the strife. Win crowns  
And earrings. Purses shall ye have of me,  
Gifts from Zábul and turbans from Kábul."

V. 956

The mighty blessed him: "Ne'er may crown and  
signet  
Lack thee!"

He donned his armour and went forth  
With confidence upon the battlefield.  
He put his chain-mail under his cuirass,  
And over it he donned Babr-i-Bayán.  
He wore a helmet wrought of steel of Chin—  
One to make foemen meditate on death.  
He girded up his loins by God's command,  
And mounted Rakhsh like some mad elephant.  
The heavens were confounded at his mien,  
Earth darkened where his charger's hoofs were seen.

## § 31

*How Alucá was slain by Kámús*

The drums and trumpets sounded from both hosts,  
No room remained for guile or grammarye;  
The mountains and the plains were all a-quake,  
The earth was troubled by the tramp of steeds.  
Kámús commanded the Túránian right,  
Behind him were the mighty elephants  
And baggage. On the left the lord of Hind  
Stood clad in mail, a Rúman sword in hand,  
And in the centre was the Khán of Chín.  
The sky grew dark, the earth shook. Fariburz,  
Like Sol irradiant in Aries,  
Commanded on the left wing of Írán.  
Gúdarz, son of Kishwád, encased in steel,  
Was on the right, and in the centre Tús,  
Son of Naudar, in front were drums and clarions.  
From all parts of the host a shout arose—  
A shout which rent the ears of elephants—  
And e'en from water rose the fumes of fire:  
It was a fight surpassing warriors' dreams.  
The first man that appeared between the lines,  
His heart's blood all afoam upon his lips,  
Was that famed chief Kámús accompanied  
By soldiers, elephants, and kettledrums.  
He, bearing in his hand an ox-head mace,  
Cried like a furious elephant trumpeting:—  
"Where is that man on foot who challengeth  
Illustrious heroes? Let him come and see  
A bow and arrow that will cost him life."

V. 957

The gallant warriors—illustrious Tús,  
Ruhhám, and Gív—beheld Kámús, but none  
Desired to strive with him; the field remained  
Void of Íránian chiefs; none had the strength

To fight with him for he was like a pard ;  
 They were like deer. Yet was there one, Alwá,  
 A Zábulf, who promptly drew his sword.  
 He used to bear the spear and guard the back  
 Of Rustam, was a skilful cavalier,  
 And had with liver-burning toil and trouble  
 Acquired from him the use of arrow, mace,  
 And spear. What said the sage, the eloquent,  
 The ancient man ? Now listen and perpend :—  
 " Let not thy prowess fill thee with conceit,  
 But look well to the ground beneath thy feet ;  
 To match a rivulet against the sea  
 Would be a contest of insanity."

V. 958

Now when Alwá adventured on Kámús,  
 Who for his part was eager for the fray,  
 They cleared an ample space. He of Kashán  
 Camg wolf-like, with his spear unhorsed his foe  
 With ease, then wheeled his steed and trampled o'er  
 The fallen till the dust was red with gore.

## § 32

*How Kámús was slain by Rustam*

The peerless Rustam grieved about Alwá,  
 Let loose the twisted lasso from its straps,  
 And took his massive mace as for a strife  
 Of chiefs. He roared like some mad elephant  
 As he advanced with lasso on his arm  
 And mace in hand. Kámús said : " Bluster not  
 So much about a thread of sixty coils."

" The lion roareth bravely," Rustam said,  
 " On catching sight of game. Thou wast the first  
 To put the girdle on in this dispute,  
 And thou hast slain a noble of Írán.  
 Thou sayest that my lasso is a thread ;

Now shalt thou see how tight the knots will hold.  
Thy fate doth drive thee on, man of Kashán !  
Since here no place is left thee save the dust."

Kámús the valiant urged his dun steed on,  
His foe a lasso-bearing Elephant,  
And let out with his glittering glaive, intent  
To sever Rustam's head. The point alighted  
On Rakhsh's neck and clave the battle-mail,  
But failed to wound. The elephantine hero  
Coiled, whirled, and flung the lasso round his foe,  
Then spurred away and made the leather fast  
Beneath his thigh while Rakhsh flew eagle-like.  
Kámús undaunted tightly gripped his steed,  
Pressed firmly on the stirrups, loosed the reins,  
And sought by force to break the twisted thong,  
Becoming frantic, but the raw hide held.  
The elephantine hero, checking Rakhsh,  
Wheeled, jerked Kámús headforemost to the ground,  
Came up, secured him in the lasso's coils,  
And said to him: "Thou art not dangerous now.  
In vain are all thy charms and spells; thy soul  
Hath made a fruitless bargain with the Div."

He bound his prisoner's hands behind the back,  
Firm as a rock, then grasped the coils, returned  
Afoot, his foe beneath his arm, and told  
The warriors: "This lover of the fray  
Essayed to match himself with me in strength,  
But 'tis the wont with this deceitful world  
At times to elevate, at times bring low.  
It causeth both our happiness and grief,  
And one is whiles on earth, whiles in the clouds.  
Now this illustrious warrior, who ever  
Was wont to prove the lion's match in fight,  
Set forth to desolate Írán, to make  
A den of lions of our fields and fells,  
And leave behind no palaces or bowers

Of roses in Zábul or in Kábul.

He would not lay aside that mace of his  
Till he had slaughtered Rustam son of Zál;  
But now his helm and hauberk are his shroud,  
His crown is dust, and his jupon the grave.  
On what wise do ye purpose slaying him,  
Because Kámús the warrior's work is done?"

V. 960

Then Rustam flung Kámús upon the ground  
Before the chiefs; the warriors left their ranks,  
They hacked his body with their scimitars,  
And drenched the stones and dust beneath with blood.

Such is the course of heaven and destiny,  
Now causing joy, then pain and misery!  
All is toil, anguish, trouble, and distress;  
Thy courage will not make it more or less.  
Thy body hath a load of guilt to bear,  
Thy spirit dwelleth in a world of care;  
And let not bravery thy thoughts elate,  
For stretched above thee is the hand of Fate.  
With all thy might incline to virtue's ways,  
And offer unto God—the Guide—thy praise.

The strife with brave Kámús hath reached its goal  
In death when He that gave took back the soul.  
Now valour and revenge will fill the scene:  
I tell the battle with the Khán of Chín.

## PART III

### THE STORY OF RUSTAM AND THE KHÁN OF CHÍN

#### ARGUMENT

There are abortive negotiations, but the campaign continues. Many Túránian chiefs are slain by Rustam, who takes the Khán of Chín prisoner. He also slays Káfúr, the man-eater. Afrisiyáb summons Páládwand to his aid, but again Rustam is triumphant. He returns victorious to Irán, is welcomed and rewarded by Kai Khusrau, and then departs to Sistán.

#### NOTE

§ 14. It is said that when Firdausí was buried in his own garden at Tús,<sup>1</sup> the great Shaikh of the time—Abúl Kásim of Gurgán—refused to be present because, he said, Firdausí, though a learned and religious man, had deserted his principles and spent his time in discoursing of men of bad religion and fire-worshippers. That night the Shaikh had a dream of Paradise. He saw a magnificent palace with a jewelled throne, and asked whose it was. "It is for Firdausí," was the reply. Then the poet appeared wearing a green robe and an emerald-coloured crown upon his head. "O Firdausí!" said the Shaikh, "whence this rank and splendour?" The poet answered: "From a couplet or two confessing the Unity of God." The Shaikh, when he woke, went and prayed at Firdausí's tomb. Probably the lines referred to are those at the end of this section.<sup>2</sup>

§ 20. Cannibalism was not unknown in former times among the savage tribes of the North, as we learn from Herodotus. On the upper waters of the Borysthenes (the Dnieper) dwelt the Androphagoi proper, who seem to have been of Finnish race, some tribes of which appear to have retained their cannibalistic

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Vol. i. p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> C, Persian Preface, p. 60, and *note*.

propensity as late as the Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup> On the steppes east of the Caspian dwelt the Massageteæ, and to the north of them, and south-east of the Ural Mountains, the Issedones. Both these tribes were to some extent cannibals.<sup>2</sup> The legend in the text of a man-eating community can be accounted for without difficulty.

## § 1

*How the Khán of Chín had Tidings of the Slaying  
of Kámús*

V. 961

Now, O enlightened sage! speak but to name  
God the Sustainer of heaven's circling frame,  
And Guide to good. Thine end of life will come,  
And thou wilt rest within the other home,  
But first narrate again this tale of yore  
Told by the rustic minstrel from his store.

Anon news reached the Khán: "Kámús is slain  
Upon the field, and day is turned to gloom  
And bitterness before the chiefs of Balkh,  
Kashán, and Shakhn."

All looked on one another,  
And asked: "Who can this prowrest warrior be?  
What is his name? Who is he? Who can face him?"

Thus to Húmán the Lion spake, Pírán:—  
"My soul hath had enough of strife to-day.  
How shall our warriors desire to fight  
When our brave Crocodile hath just been slain?  
He was a peerless noble; not a horseman  
Had form more elephantine, and the man  
That could in battle bind him with the lasso  
Might well in days of fight seize by the head  
An elephant and dash it to the ground."

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, iv. 18 and 106. BAG, Vol. i. p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 216 and iv. 26.

The troops in sore distress about Kámús  
 Came in a body weeping to the Khán,  
 To whom Pírán did reverence sadly, saying :—  
 "O thou exalted o'er yon azure dome!  
 Thou hast beheld and heard how we have fared  
 From first to last upon this battlefield.  
 Devise a remedy for our misfortune  
 Thyself without consulting any one.  
 Choose from our army's spies one that can bring  
 Hid things to light and find out who he is—  
 This lion-hearted one for whom our host  
 Hath not a match; then we will all face death,  
 And fight him on the field."

The Khán replied :—

"'Tis what concerneth me; I fain would know  
 The name of this pernicious paladin,  
 Who taketh Lions in his lasso's coils;  
 But seeing death may not be remedied,  
 And wishes, prayers, and vigour naught avail,  
 For to that end we all are mother-born,  
 And yield our necks thereto against our wills,  
 While none escapeth turning heaven's decree,  
 Not if he dash to earth an elephant,  
 Let not your hearts be sorrowful for him,  
 Who perished in the twisted lasso's coils,  
 For with my lasso I will bring to earth  
 The man that slew Kámús, and make Írán  
 Run river-like with blood to glut the heart  
 Of king Afrásiyáb."

V. 962

He then assembled

Full many a noble from the army—swordsmen  
 And bravest of the brave—and said to them :—  
 "As for this warrior with his archery,  
 This lasso-flinging, hero-taking horseman,  
 'Tis needful that ye spy out where he is  
 Upon the left or right wing of their host ;

Inquire withal about his name and land;  
Then will we do his business out of hand."

## § 2

*How Chingish fared with Rustam*

A lusty cavalier—a faithful liege—  
By name Chingish—a seeker of renown—  
A man of valour and adventurous,  
Stepped forth and volunteered. He thus addressed  
The Khan: "Exalted! all the world would have  
Thy love. Though this man be a lion I  
Will make him lifeless when I take the field,  
Will fight him single-handed and convert  
The glory of Írán to infamy.  
I will be foremost to avenge Kámús,  
And thus restore his honour after death."

The Khán applauded him. He kissed the ground  
Before his lord, who said: "Achieve this vengeance,  
Bring me yon overweening head, and I  
Will give thee from my hoards so many gems  
That thou shalt never need to toil again."

Chingish spurred forth swift as Ázargashasp,  
Approached the Íránians, drew a poplar arrow,  
And cried: "This is my field, the heads of nobles  
Are in my clutch. If that bold lasso-flinger,  
Who useth sometimes lasso, sometimes shaft,  
And took Kámús, will come upon the field,  
His station shall be void."

He roamed about,  
And cried: "Where is that lion-warrior?"

Then Rustam with his mace bestirred himself,  
And straightway mounted Rakhsh. "I am," he said,  
"That chief-o'erthrowing, Lion-capturer,

I have mace, lasso, and artillery,  
And now for thee, as for the brave Kámús  
'Tis time to rub eyes in the dust."

Chingish

Rejoined: "What are thy name, thy race, and purpose  
That I may know whose blood I shed amid  
The dust of battle?"

Rustam answered: "Wretch!

Ne'er may the tree that taketh thee for fruit  
Bloom in the garth. To thee my name and spear-point  
Are death, thy mail and helm thy winding-sheet."

That insolent came wind-like, strung his bow,  
Which seemed a raining cloud, and said to Rustam,  
His mail-clad opposite: "Stay, valiant horseman!  
Thou shalt have fight enough."

The other raised

His shield, perceiving that the shafts would pierce  
His mail. Chingish marked well that elephant-form,  
Tall as a straight-stemmed cypress in a garden,  
Beheld that steed—a Hill beneath a Hill  
And not aweary—thought: "To run away  
Is better than to bring myself to harm,"  
And spurred his heavy-laden charger on  
In flight, intending to rejoin his troops;  
But Rustam, that bold horseman, urged on Rakhsh  
Like fire and followed up his noble foe.  
As like a furious elephant he gained  
Upon Chingish the plain was full of hubbub,  
And both the armies saw amazedly  
How Rustam caught the charger of Chingish  
And held it by the tail until the rider  
In terror threw himself upon the ground;  
His helm fell off him and he begged for life,  
But peerless Rustam stretched him on the dust,  
Struck off his head, and thought of him no more.  
The Íránian nobles praised their paladin,

Who, glittering spear in hand, rode to and fro  
Between the Iránian army and the foe.

## § 3

*How the Khán of Chín sent Húmán to Rustam*

Much grieved the Khán and raged at that mishap;  
He said thus to Húmán: "Now time and place  
Are straitened to us. Go, for thou art shrewd,  
And learn the name of yon great paladin."

Húmán replied: "No anvil I or ivory  
In fight. Kámús the warrior had no peer  
For valour and discretion, so despise not  
The cavalier that lassoed him. I go  
To learn whom God will favour on this field."

V. 965

As swift as wind he went inside his tent,  
Took other helmet, flag, and horse, and changed  
The fashion of his mail and shield, then went,  
And, drawing near to Rustam, paused to scan  
That hero's neck and limbs, and said: "Renowned one,  
Brave lasso-flinger, warlike cavalier!  
By God, I tremble for my monarch's throne  
When I behold a foeman such as thou art,  
In this great host I see no valiant noble  
And chief like thee. One courting such a combat  
Could make the dust fly from a lion's heart!  
Tell me about thy country, race, and home,  
Inform me of thy parentage and name.  
I have not seen among the Iránian host  
A man save thee who hath the heart to fight.  
I love a warrior, and most of all  
The man that hath the temper of a pard;  
So now if thou wilt let me know thy name,  
Land, stock, and home, thou wilt confer a favour,  
For thou wilt ease my heart."

## The paladin

Said: "Noble warrior of ardent soul!  
 Why tell not thy name, country, realm, and home?  
 Why hast thou come with this bland courtesy,  
 And so much talk? If thou desirest peace,  
 Not further loss in war, find him that shed  
 The blood of Siyâwush, and so involved us  
 In all the fire of feud. Find in thy host  
 Alike the guilty and the innocent;  
 Find too the men, the steeds caparisoned,  
 And goods which Siyâwush took from Írán;  
 Send all to us, and I will wish no longer  
 To fight the Turkmans: ye shall be my friends  
 In all, I will not speed revenge, seek strife,  
 Or lay the heads of nobles in the dust.  
 I will communicate with Kai Khusrâu,  
 Will purge his heart and brain of grief and vengeance,  
 And send to him the culprits; he may pity them,  
 And pardon their offence. Now will I tell thee  
 Their names, and may their names and schemes both  
 perish!

The head of the offence was Garsîwâz,  
 Who sought to trouble and afflict Írán;  
 Next any that thou knowest of Túr's seed  
 That made this Water brackish wantonly,  
 Such as Gurwî the son of Zira, born  
 Unjust and loveless; perish all his race!  
 They did the injury to Siyâwush,  
 Which was the key to all these bonds of bale;  
 Next those who wrecked their monarch's brain and  
 heart,  
 And made blood flow like water, also those  
 Who had no quarrel with the Íránians,  
 And yet have taken part in this campaign,  
 The mighty men that are of Wîsa's race,  
 Men double-faced and pied to every one,

V. 967

Such as Húmán, Lahhák, and Farshidward,  
 Kulbád and Nastíhan the lion-man.  
 If ye accomplish this that I demand,  
 And end our quest for vengeance, I will shut  
 The door of our revenge upon thy country;  
 Thou shalt not need to clothe thy breast in mail;  
 But if thou speakest in another sense  
 I will renew our quarrel by fresh wars,  
 And by the life and head of great Khusrau  
 Make reek the marches of Túrán. Shaugul  
 Shall not survive nor yet the Khán of Chín,  
 Or warrior of the country of Túrán.  
 Thou hast essayed me on this battlefield;  
 My way and mode of fight is always this.  
 One of the nobles of Írán am I,  
 Wont to encounter Lions in the fray,  
 And many heads have I removed from bodies  
 Whose only winding-sheet was grimy dust.  
 I ne'er have spoken on this wise before,  
 My purpose first and last hath been revenge;  
 Now therefore hearken to me and embrace  
 These fair proposals."

At these words Húmán

Was sore afraid and trembled like a leaf,  
 For hearing Rustam talk in such a strain  
 He saw what vengeance would befall his kin,  
 And answered: "Lion-hearted warrior!  
 With strength and form and stature such as thine  
 Thy proper seat is on the Íránian throne.  
 At least thou art a mighty paladin  
 Or some redoubtable Íránian chief.

V. 968

Thou hast inquired about my race and name,  
 But not accorded what I asked of thee.  
 My name is Kúh. A warrior brave am I.  
 My sire is Búsipás—the lion-like.  
 I have accompanied this host from far,

And come a soldier to this scene of strife,  
 Now that thou hast my name and race aright  
 I too must ask for thine, which I require  
 That I may make thy wishes known to all.  
 So now if thou wilt let me know thy name<sup>1</sup>  
 I will return rejoicing to the camp.  
 What thou hast spoken on this battlefield  
 Will I detail in presence of the host,  
 And in the presence of Manshúr, the Khán  
 Of Chin, and Turkman warriors and chiefs."

But Rustam said to him: "Seek not my name:  
 Say what I seemed to thee. My heart is burning  
 With love toward Pírán, because the slaughter  
 Of Siyáwush hath pierced his liver too;  
 He is the gentlest man in all Túrán.  
 Speed him to me forthwith and we will see  
 What time may bring."

Húmán replied: "O great one!  
 Then thou art eager to behold Pírán!  
 What knowest thou of him or of Kulbád,  
 Púlád, or of Gurwí the son of Zíra?"

"Why ask so many questions?" Rustam said.  
 "Try not to make a river run up-hill:  
 As for these mighty hosts, dost thou not see  
 That if they fight or not is left to thee?"

#### § 4

*How Pírán took Counsel with Húmán and the Khán*

Húmán withdrew with all his favour changed,  
 And told Pírán: "O favourite of fortune!  
 Great ill hath come on us! This lion-heart  
 Is Rustam of Zábúl, and we may now  
 Weep for our troops. He talked at large with me,

V. 969

<sup>1</sup> Reading with C and P.

Recalling what we each had done amiss,  
 And I, my brother! was the first accused.  
 He spake much of revenge for Siyáwush,  
 Of past events, of waste and settlement,  
 Of what he purposed and of righteous dealing,  
 About Bahrán and those Gúdarzians,  
 And all that fell. His love is all for thee  
 Of whom he spake at large with kindness.  
 He calleth now for thee of all this host;  
 I know not why. Go see him spear in hand,  
 Set like a hill upon another hill,  
 With mail and mace and leopard-skin cuirass,  
 Bestriding his great, furious Elephant.  
 Then wilt thou see that I have told no lies;  
 E'en fire receiveth brightness from his sword.  
 He will not budge without an interview;  
 It is for thy sake that he tarrieth thus.  
 Bespeak him fairly when thou seest him,  
 Draw not thy sword, and act not hastily."

Pírán replied: "Exalted one! I fear  
 My time hath come. If yonder warrior  
 Be Rustam, then this plain will be a scene  
 Of grief for us. Our fields already burn;  
 I know not what our evil star hath done."

He went with tearful eyes before the Khán,  
 Pierced through the liver, angry, seared at heart,  
 And said to him: "O monarch! be not hasty,  
 Because the case is altered with us now.  
 Whenas Kámús the warrior's time had come  
 The thought occurred to me: 'This Iron Wall  
 Is Rustam, with his raw hide lasso-coils.'  
 Afrásiyáb may come in all his pomp,  
 But none will dream of seeing Rustam's back;  
 Dís sicken fighting him. What is one man  
 Or one whole plain-full in opposing him?  
 He hath been long lord of Zábulistán,

And foster-sire erewhile to Siyáwush,  
 And warreth like a father in his anguish  
 To make the world strait to Afrásiyáb;  
 This elephantine one hath summoned me  
 Of all this countless host, I know not why;  
 But I will go and ascertain his will  
 Because my spirit is brought low with care."

The Khán said: "Go, say that which must be said  
 With courtesy. If he desireth peace  
 And wealth, why toil our armies on this plain?  
 Agree to give great gifts and then return;  
 'Tis better not to court so great a fight;  
 But, since he is arrayed in leopard-skin,  
 Good sooth! he may be bent upon a conflict;  
 Then we will battle likewise in full force,  
 And press him closely on the field of strife.  
 Put we our trust in God and war with Rustam  
 With all our strength; his body is not brass  
 And iron, but is blood and hair and flesh,  
 Nor shall we have to fight him in the sky:  
 Why burn thy heart with care and grief? Know this,  
 That, even if he feed on stone and iron,  
 Shafts and two-headed darts will pierce him. We  
 Outnumber them three hundred times. 'Tis ill  
 To be in dudgeon on this battlefield.  
 This Zábulí, this famous warrior,  
 Outvieth not an elephant in fight,  
 And I will show him with mine own such play  
 That he no more will meet me in the fray."

V. 971

## § 5

*How Pírán came to Rustam*

Pírán departed full of pain and fear,  
 Heart-rent at Rustam's doings. He approached

The army of Írán and cried: "O chief,  
And lover of the fray! I heard that thou  
Hadst called for me of all this countless host  
Of Turkmans, and have come forth from my lines  
To thine to see what thou wouldst have of me."

When noble Rustam knew that from the Turkmans  
A warrior approached he met Pírán  
Before the host, an iron helm on head.

"What is thy name, O Turkman!" he demanded,  
"What is thy will and purpose in this coming?"

The other said: "Pírán am I, the chief  
Of yonder chieftains. Thou hast asked Húmán,  
The son of Wisa, for me in kind words,  
Which made my heart yearn toward thee, paladin!  
Declare to me which of the chiefs thou art."

He answered: "I am Rustam of Zábul,  
My sword is from Kábul, my clothing mail."

Pírán, on hearing noble Rustam's words,  
Dismounted and did reverence. Rustam said:—  
"I greet thee from the bright-souled Sun Khusráu,  
O paladin! and from his mother too,  
The daughter of Afrásiyáb, who dreameth  
Of thy love every night."

Pírán replied:—

"I greet thee also, elephantine chief!  
In God's name and the host's. May He Who giveth  
All good things bless thee, may thy signet be  
A passport to the sky. Thanks be to God,  
My Refuge, that I see thee here. Are Zál,  
The son of Sám, Zawára, Farámarz,  
Those men of prudent hearts and prosperous—  
May this world never know the want of them—  
Are they in health, good spirits, and estate?  
Now will I speak unless thou take it ill  
That subjects should complain of those in power.  
I planted in the Garden once a Tree,

Whose leaves proved colocynth, whose fruit proved  
blood,

And it hath caused me many grievous tears,  
For, though 'twas once my treasure and my life,  
It now hath brought me grief and yieldeth bane  
Instead of antidote, for Siyáwush

Esteemed me as his sire and shield from harm,  
While I gave him my daughter and a province,  
That he might illustrate my race; but some  
Have slain him and my daughter cruelly,

And haply thou wilt say it served me right.  
Great are the care, the anguish, and the pains,  
That I have suffered both from king and people,  
And God shall be my witness in the world,

Although to call the Almighty as a witness  
Is wrong, and though so long a time hath passed,  
And I have heard much counsel from the wise,  
That mourning hath not ceased within my house,  
And that my soul is still aflame with grief,  
That I pour out my blood instead of tears,  
And constantly am in the leech's hands,

V. 973

That act hath ruined me, heaven hath not turned  
As I could wish; I, since I learned the fate  
Of Siyáwush, have done naught, good or ill,  
But been between two realms and two great kings  
In anguish, misery, and impotence.

V. 974

I risked my life for Farangís, whose father  
Had sought to slay her, but I kept her hidden  
In mine own house, providing for her there.  
She in return would have my life, would have  
Her foemen's heads from me! All grief am I,  
O paladin! and both sides rail at me.

I have no way to flee Afrásiyáb,

I have no other resting-place or home;

I am concerned for treasure, lands, and herds,  
And see not any pretext for departing;

I have my sons and many women-folk,  
 Such are the cares and ties of every one.  
 Whene'er Afrásiyáb commandeth war  
 He will not suffer me to close mine eyes;  
 Against my will I must lead forth the host,  
 I may not disobey. The occasion now  
 Is one for pity not for war with me.  
 Had I no other pain and grief at heart  
 About my kin save that Pílsam was slain. . . .<sup>1</sup>  
 But there are many other gallant youths,  
 Who have not had their fill of combating,  
 And seeing that I tremble for my life  
 I speak about my sons and property.  
 By God the Conqueror, O paladin!  
 Be not incensed against me, harbour not  
 A grudge against my kin, keep God in mind.  
 Now by the illustrious soul of Siyáwush  
 I swear that death is better far for me  
 Than breastplate, sword, and helm, for if our troops  
 Engage thou wilt see mountains of the slain;  
 Yet those from Shakh, Kashán, Sakláb, and Hind—  
 The lands between the Indus and this march—  
 Are guiltless of the blood of Siyáwush,  
 Though brought as soldiers to this battlefield.  
 Peace bettereth war with me. Be not too hard.  
 Speak out thy mind; thou art more wise than I,  
 And mightier in war and prowess."

Rustam

Replied not as Pírán desired but said :—  
 " Since I and other warriors of the Sháh  
 Armed for the field I have seen naught but good  
 From thee—the least injurious of Turkmans.  
 Thou hast done righteously in all and sought  
 To lead Túrán aright. The leopard knoweth  
 That war and strife are evils, rocks and mountains

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II. p. 350.

Know that, but when the king<sup>s</sup> of kings is bent  
 On vengeance we must pour the arrows in.  
 On two conditions there may be peace yet;  
 Consider if ye will consent to them:  
 One is—that thou shalt send to Kai Khusráu  
 In bonds all those that through the prince's death  
 Insensately have set this scene of strife,  
 Although not authors of the war, and those,  
 The guilty of the blood of that just head,  
 Although they may be not upon the field.  
 The other is—thou shalt prepare thyself,  
 And come with me to our victorious Sháh.  
 As to the goods which thou wilt leave behind,  
 And dost esteem so precious, thou shalt have  
 Ten for each one from him, so prate not thou  
 About the baggage of the Turkman host."

Pírán reflected: "To desert Túrán,  
 And go before that king were grave indeed:  
 Again by thus demanding those in fault  
 In wreak for Siyáwush he will bring low  
 Afrásiyáb's great men—his kith and kin—  
 The man with thrones and treasure, place and power.  
 How could I dare to speak of such a thing?  
 He asketh what is quite preposterous!  
 Húmán, Kulbád, and Farshídward—the men  
 That brought about the anguish of Gúdarz—  
 Are all involved, and this can never be:  
 No river in the world can run such water.  
 I must adopt mine own expedient,  
 Take mine own way."

He said: "O paladin!  
 Mayst thou be ever young and bright of mind.  
 I will depart and tell this to the chiefs—  
 Manshúr, Shangul, and to the Khán of Chín—  
 And send a cameleer to tell the king  
 Thy words, and rouse him from his slumbering."

## § 6

*How the Túrniáns took Counsel for Battle with the Írániáns*

Pírán departed to the host like wind,  
 Assembled those that were of Wísa's race,  
 And told the secret, saying: "Our fall or rise  
 Hath come, for know ye that this Lion-heart  
 Is Rustam, who hath ta'en the field in grief  
 With chiefs and Lions from Zábulistán  
 And nobles from Kábulistán. With him  
 There are Gúdarz and Gív and Tús, and we  
 Must fight, though 'gainst our wills, and be disgraced.  
 Since Rustam is the avenger and the leader  
 No horsemen in the world will hold their own.  
 He seeketh of the Turkmans those in fault,  
 And troubleth not about the innocent.  
 Who to your knowledge is not guilty here,  
 And is not much affected by our king?  
 Behold our country will be desolate,  
 The warriors of Írán will work their will,  
 And all be lost, the young, the old, the monarch,  
 The treasure, army, throne, and diadem.  
 I said to our unjust king: 'Be not thou  
 So fiery and stormful, else some day,  
 And with no warning, thou wilt be consumed,  
 Thy wit be burned and thy heart's eye sewn up.'  
 The imperious monarch brooked not mine advice,  
 Or that of the illustrious company,  
 But made away with noble Siyáwush  
 Without consulting with the brave and wise.  
 Thou wilt see nothing left of state or crown,  
 Throne, elephants of war, or diadem;  
 The Íránian king will be rejoiced thereat  
 While grief and pain will be our warriors' portion.  
 Woe for our gallant hearts and this great host,

Endowed with Grace, tall stature, crown, and state !  
 All will be spoiled henceforth before your eyes,  
 None will turn happy from the battlefield,  
 For they will tread us 'neath their horses' hoofs;  
 Our wakeful fortune's light will be bedimmed.  
 My heart is burning for Húmán, my soul  
 Is flaming for Rúín, for Rustam's heart  
 Is brimming with revenge for Siyáwush  
 For whom his eyebrows are fulfilled with frowns.  
 I will go sadly to the Khán and tell him  
 What this revenge hath cost me."

Swift as dust

He went with full heart and with lips all sighs,  
 And found the camp-enclosure full of clamour,  
 With bloody tulips set on saffron cheeks,  
 For many of the kindred of Kámús  
 Had come demanding vengeance. They exclaimed :—  
 " Afrásiyáb will dream no more of greatness !  
 Why did this king, who hath no man to fight  
 On days of battle, thus begin the feud ?  
 We, to avenge Kámús, with tearful eyes  
 Will lead the army of Kashán to Chín,  
 And thence and from Barbar, from the Buzgúsh,  
 From the Sagsárs and from Mázandarán  
 Will we bring mace-armed troops to slaughter Rustam  
 That none may hear his voice. Afrásiyáb,  
 If fain for vengeance, must not rest or sleep."

V. 978

Moreover from the kindred of Chingish  
 And Ashkabús a din like beating drums  
 Arose, while all in anguish for their kinsmen  
 Were raining tears of gall on saffron cheeks,  
 And saying midst their tears : " We will not rest  
 Or sleep henceforth till we have fired Sístán,  
 And given its people doleful nights and days,  
 Have set the head of Rustam of Zábúl  
 Upon the stake in grief for our great dead,

And, having burned his body, strewn the ashes  
Before his palace-gate."

Pírán was dazed,  
His favour darkened at their lamentations,  
And thus he said: "Afflicted, helpless men,  
Possessed by pain and care and fed on grief!  
Ye surely cannot know that your own time  
Is almost o'er."

He sought the Khán and said:—

"This little war of ours is growing long.  
A Crocodile, whose mail is leopard-skin,  
Hath come up from the river to the fight,  
For Rustam hath brought troops from every side,  
And famous chiefs; our toils are thrown away,  
And unjust deeds receive just punishment.  
Afrásiyáb was so infatuate  
That Siyáwush was murdered by his hand,  
Urged to it by the insensate Garsíwaz.  
Now Siyáwush was great, a royal prince  
Brought up by Rustam of Zábulistán,  
Who fighting to avenge his fosterling  
Will bring the heavens down. No leopard's claws  
Or trunk of elephant, no lofty mountain  
Or river Nile<sup>1</sup> will aught avail with him  
When he shall take the field before his host.  
He rideth on a horse that needeth not  
A ship in seas of blood. We may not reckon  
This conflict trifling; all have seen his power.  
A fire hath fallen from azure heaven and caused  
Our hearts to fume with fear. Convoke the sages,  
The priests, the great, and find the remedy—  
A champion competent to take the field:  
We may perchance escape these ills and reach  
Our homes albeit with diminished fortunes.

V. 979

<sup>1</sup> "ni les flots de l'Indus" (Mohl).

Men should act fairly ever, not be first  
To seek a quarrel."

Troubled at Pírán

The Khán invoked the Maker's name and said:—  
"How shall we act encountered by such hosts?"

Then said Shangul: "To what end is this talk,  
Exalted one? We sped o'er flood and waste  
From every clime to help Afrásiyáb,  
Receiving gifts and armlets; if we fight not  
We came like lions and shall go like foxes.  
We sprang like fearless lions, losing not  
One day upon the march, why such alarm  
Because one man from Sigz encountereth us?  
Shame on such talk! Thou must take other order.  
Grant that he is a furious Elephant,  
And grappleth Lions on the battle-field,  
Still, though he slew Kámús the warrior,  
We must not hesitate, and since 'tis clear,  
Because Pírán is sleepless with dismay,  
That some one holdeth Rustam in respect,  
I now extend my hand as succourer.  
No Elephant is he or Lion's match,  
Nor is his prowess as Pírán asserteth.  
We must be firm herein, and not erase  
All thoughts of vengeance on him from our hearts.  
Draw we our maces at the dawn, advance  
Across the plain, make air like clouds in spring,  
And pour a rain of arrows on the foe;  
Then through the dust of horse and crash of axes  
None must know head from foot. Observe me  
well,  
And, when I raise the war-cry, charge amain.  
We are—we warriors and cavaliers—  
Good sooth! above a hundred thousand strong,  
And shall we, lifeless though not slain, thus vilely  
Shrink from one man? When I confront the Sigzian

V. 980

Send ye the dust-clouds skyward; let none 'scape;  
A coward's heart is naught."

On hearing this,

Pírán, old as he was, grew young of heart,  
And said: "Live happy, free from grief and care,"  
While all the nobles and the Khán of Chín  
Acclaimed the king of Hind.

Now when Pírán

Came to his tent the chiefs resorted thither—

v. 981

Húmán, Bármán, and Nastíhan, whose minds  
Were poised 'twixt hope and fear. Húmán inquired:—  
"What is thy purpose? Doth it furnish ground  
For peace, or are the armies to engage?"

Pírán told what Shangul had said, and how  
The troops agreed to battle on, whereat  
Húmán was sore displeased and, incensed  
Against ill-starred Shangul, said to Pírán:—  
"None can escape the sky and what it bringeth."

He met Kulbád and said: "Shangul is mad!  
If Rustam be what I have seen, and heard  
From chiefs, Shangul, Kundur, Manshúr, will not  
Survive this battlefield, nor will the Khán.  
Withdraw we for a while and reckon up  
Our chance of gain or loss. Thou wilt behold  
Of this unbounded host, whose massive maces  
Might quell the world, the more part laid to earth  
With blood-drenched helms and mail for winding-sheet."

Kulbád replied: "O wielder of the sword!  
Keep if thou canst from evil presages,  
And sadden not the hearts of thine own side;  
The matter may be other than we think.  
The better course for thee is not to fret  
Or worry over ills not come as yet."

## § 7

*How Rustam harangued his Troops*

V. 982

On his side Rustam called his mighty men—  
Tús, Gív, Gúdarz, Ruhhám, and Faríburz,  
Kharrád the warrior and Gustaham,  
Gurgín the veteran, the cavalier,  
And that illustrious man of war Bízhan.  
"Ye men of wisdom!" said the peerless chief,  
Addressing them at large in fitting words,  
"Ye archimages wise and shrewd of heart!  
The man whom God doth render fortunate  
Is fit for crown and throne; he will possess  
The world, prevail in war, and will not fear  
The leopard, elephant, or crocodile.  
Our strength is all from God, and to what end  
Are we upon this darksome earth of ours?  
To think no evil, but to choose the way  
Of God and wisdom, since the world is no man's,  
And 'tis not well to take much joy therein;  
Our worth is based on right and hardihood  
While knavery involveth harm and loss.  
Pírán was heart-seared when he came to me  
So hastily, he spake in many words  
Of his good offices to Siyáwush,  
Of his own travail and anxiety,  
And how through his entreaties Farangís  
Escaped the Dragon's breath; and yet withal  
My heart foreboded that Pírán would be  
Among the first to perish in this war,  
His son and brother die before his eyes  
With many of the noblest of his kin,  
And that Khusrau would slay Afrásiyáb:  
Such was my dream. Know that they all will perish  
Beneath our feet, not one man will survive:

V. 983

Howbeit I would not that this hand of mine  
 Should slay their general; he hath no craft  
 But honesty, and thinketh not of ill.  
 If then he shall accomplish what he said,  
 Be ancient wrongs forgotten; if he yield  
 The culprits and the goods, the strife is done,  
 The war for me is over; in this world  
 To deal uprightly is the best of all things.  
 If from these chiefs with thrones and elephants—  
 An army like the blue sea—he dispatch  
 Both crowns and wealth, I shall not trouble further  
 About the Turkmans. They will all pay tribute  
 Not being able to contend with us,  
 And we will spare their lives because the All-giver  
 Hath taught us wisdom and right ways. The world  
 Is full of treasures, thrones, and crowns: a man  
 Were fortunate indeed to win them all!"

Gúdarz in hearing this stood up and said  
 To Rustam: "O thou chieftain good and just,  
 The host's support, the adornment of the throne!  
 The crown and throne and helm are bright through  
 thee.

Resplendent wisdom is thy capital  
 And provand of thy soul. Peace is no doubt  
 A better thing than war, but mark this well—  
 The ox hath yet his hide. I will repeat  
 To thee a saying of the olden times:—  
 'The souls of evil men shun righteousness  
 E'en as the shoulders shun the burden's stress.'  
 Pírán now giveth pledges in his strait,  
 But some day he will struggle to evade them.  
 The Maker fashioned him a double-dealer,  
 So hearken not to him and 'scape his guile.  
 When first we set the battle in array  
 We held a parley and forwent the fight  
 Because an envoy came to say from him:—

'I am averse from strife and battlefield,  
 And, recking not of country and of tents,  
 Have girded up my loins to serve the Sháh.'  
 He heard from us much counsel and advice,  
 And said: 'Henceforth is war no mate of mine;  
 I will depart and compass this affair  
 Without delay, announcing to my kin  
 My course herein, for I have throne and treasure  
 And cattle, and for them I will provide.'  
 I said: 'Thy right course is to come at once;  
 Throne, wealth, and goods await thee in Írán;  
 But keep the matter secret that thy fault  
 May not be patent to Afrásiyáb.'  
 Pírán, when we had spoken, went his way,  
 And all that night companioned with the wind.  
 He sent Afrásiyáb a cameleer  
 To say: 'Array thy troops; a host hath come.'  
 Thou wouldst have said that we had held no parle,  
 Because it came to nothing, and Pírán  
 Upon the tenth day led his army forth  
 Toward the plain and filled the world with troops.  
 Just now he set, Oleader of the host!  
 Upon thy path another toy; just now,  
 On seeing thy lasso's coils, he feared for life.  
 Their whole reliance was upon Kámús,  
 And generals like Fartús and like Manshúr;  
 But since he hath beheld Kámús' fortune  
 Wrecked, and his slaughter in the lasso's coils,  
 Pírán now knocketh at the door of peace,  
 Not daring to remain upon the field,  
 And, since he knoweth that his fall is nigh,  
 Employeth colour, stratagem, and guile.  
 As for the criminals, the wealth, and goods,  
 'Which I,' he said, 'will gather and surrender,'  
 Thou wilt perceive that when the tymbals sound,  
 And Tús and Fariburz advance to war,

V. 985

He will in person lead the van and ever  
 Renew the combat. All his words are lies,  
 And Áhriman alone is his fit mate.  
 If thou art deaf to me mark what befell  
 My son Bahrám! Pírán thus held us back,  
 And set an ambush such that, when the day  
 Of battle came, he showed to us so great  
 A graveyard of Gúdarzians that I  
 Must weep blood all my life, and have for leech  
 An Indian sword."

Said Rustam: "Be thy words  
 And wisdom wedded. He is as thou sayest.  
 We and that old man differ, 'tis no secret;  
 But, in as much as he hath done us good,  
 I would not fight him to the bitter end.  
 Remember how he acted toward the Sháh,  
 And how he mourned the fate of Siyáwush.  
 If he should break his word and set on us  
 I have my lasso at my saddle-straps  
 To take fierce Elephants. But I will fancy  
 No ill at first; we may escape a conflict;  
 But, if he should be faithless, he shall find  
 The outcome pain and grief."

Gúdarz and Tús  
 Praised Rustam, saying: "Sol itself would fail  
 To cozen thee, and in thy presence sleights,  
 Deceptions, falsehoods, and Pírán's own words  
 Take on no lustre. May the earth ne'er lack  
 Our monarch's head and crown, and mayst thou hold  
 The chiefest place for ever."

Rustam said:—

"'Tis dark and now our brains are dazed with talk;  
 Quaff we till midnight, then safeguard our troops,  
 And we shall see what God hath purposed for us."

V. 986

He said moreover to the Íránians:—  
 "To-night as we are drinking I will take

Some happy omen and, when morrow cometh,  
 Will shoulder Sâm the cavalier's own mace,  
 Wherewith I fought against Mázandarân,  
 Attack the Crocodile in his own lair,  
 And capture camp-enclosure, crown, tiara,  
 Mace, mighty elephant, and ivory throne :  
 These will I bring and give the Íránians,  
 If after all I gird my loins for war."

The noble lieges raised a shout and went  
 For rest and slumber each man to his tent.

## § 8

*How the Íránians and Túránians set the Battle in Array*

Whenas the sun displayed its shining crown  
 The moon appeared as 'twere a silver shield,  
 But terror-stricken at the rising din  
 Declined and hid her face. The tymbals sounded  
 Before the tent of Tús, the world grew ebon  
 With chargers' dust ; it filled the air ; the ground  
 Turned indigo, and Rustam donned his mail.  
 The army of Írán drew up in line,  
 The sons intent on fight, the sires on vengeance.  
 Gúdarz son of Kishwád was on the right  
 In armour, brandishing a mace of steel,  
 While Fariburz was stationed on the left,  
 And washed the vengeance from his chieftains' hearts.<sup>1</sup>  
 Tús son of Sháh Naudar was in the centre,  
 And all earth thronged with troops. Then peerless  
 Rustam  
 Advanced to view the opposing chiefs ; the Khán,  
 Whose elephants made earth like indigo,  
 Was in the centre, on the right Kundur—  
 A gallant horseman lion-like in battle—

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.* by giving them so much that they wanted no more.

And on the left the veteran Gahár :  
The earth was wounded 'neath the horsemen's hoofs.  
Pírán, upon his rounds before the host,  
Approached Shangul, the lover of the fray,  
And said to him : " O famous man of Hind !  
Folk from Shírwán to Sind perform thy bidding.  
Thou said'st to me : ' To-morrow with the dawn  
Will I from all sides lead the host to fight ;  
Then will I challenge Rustam and bring down  
To dust that head which reacheth to the clouds.' "

He answered : " I abide by what I said,  
Thou shalt see from me neither more nor less.  
Now will I go before this vanquisher  
Of chiefs, and nail him through with arrow-points,  
Avenge Kámús and press the Íránians."

With that he made three battles of his host,  
He beat the drums and dust rose from the plain.  
They marched, each battle, with huge elephants—  
An army-front extending o'er two miles.  
The heads of all the drivers were adorned  
With gaudy colours ; each man wore a crown  
And earrings, with a gold torque round his neck,  
And belt of gold about his loins. The beasts  
Were draped with housings of brocade of Chín  
Surmounted by a throne and seat of gold.  
Then there arose the blast of clarions,  
And all the elephants of war advanced ;  
Upon the right marched thirty thousand men—  
Illustrious cavaliers armed with the spear—  
Another thirty thousand on the left  
With bows and shields of Chín. The elephants  
Were in the centre with the Khán, a throng  
That rolled earth's surface as they marched along.

## § 9

*How Rustam reproached Pírán*

Shangul went forth with Indian sword in hand  
 Between the opposing lines; a parasol  
 Of Indian make, compact of eagles' plumes,  
 O'ershadowed him. Around him was an escort  
 Which followed as he willed. On seeing this  
 Pírán rejoiced, feared not the fight with Rustam,  
 And thus addressed Húmán: "To-day will fate  
 Dispose the matter to our hearts' content  
 With this equipment and such cavaliers,  
 Each one so gallant, proud, and lion-like;  
 So go not thou thyself before the line,  
 Think not of fighting this day or the next;  
 Let thy post be behind the Khán of Chín,  
 Because thou need'st not fight, and if moreover  
 He of Zábúl, he of the sable standard,  
 Beholdeth thee, our cause is lost. Be ours  
 To note the progress of events, and see  
 What sport our wakeful fortune will afford."

V. 988

Pírán went thence toward the Íránian host  
 To where the elephantine hero stood;  
 Dismounted, did obeisance many times,  
 And said: "High heaven taketh Grace from thee,  
 Ne'er may thy days decline! Ne'er may thy face  
 Show grief! When I returned, O paladin!  
 I gave thy message both to old and young.  
 I talked to them of all thine excellence,  
 Though who on earth can praise thee worthily?  
 I spake moreover both of peace and war,  
 Employing every sort of plea. 'But how  
 Can we do this,' they said at last, 'and stay  
 Revenge as thou advisest? We can give  
 As much as he shall ask of gold and treasure,

V. 989

But as for giving up the guilty folk  
 It may not be. Consider what it meaneth.  
 Whom save the kinsmen of Afrásiyáb  
 Know'st thou as guilty? Be not rash in promise,  
 For all the men that Rustam asketh of us  
 Are chiefs—great men with thrones and diadems!  
 How shall we or how can we give them up?  
 Demands like these would make a young man gray.  
 When such an army hath arrived from Chín,  
 Sakláb, Khatlán, and from our own Túrán,  
 How should Afrásiyáb desire a peace  
 When he hath brought such hosts o'er sea and land?  
 I got no lack of blame in their reply,  
 And so I have returned to thee in haste.  
 Now of these troops an army like the sea  
 Is hurriedly preparing for the fight,  
 And know thee not but call thee 'him of Sigz.'<sup>1</sup>  
 The king of Hind is fain to fight with thee  
 With bow and arrow and with Indian sword,  
 But sure am I that in the end this host  
 Will weep because of elephantine Rustam."

When Rustam heard this he was very wroth,  
 And said thus to Pírán: "Thou luckless one!  
 Why hast thou so much guile and subterfuge?  
 Why wilt thou walk upon a precipice?  
 The king of earth hath spoken much to me  
 In public and in private of thy lies.  
 E'en now when I esteemed thee wise and prudent  
 Thou wast but one great lie from head to foot.  
 Thou wallowest recklessly in thine own blood  
 In evil case, but worse awaiteth thee.  
 Although a spot were Hell 'twere Paradise  
 Contrasted with the soil beneath thy feet.  
 'I prithee leave,' I said, 'this black, bad land,  
 And change it for a settled realm'; such life,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Vol. li, p. 100, and note.

As this is wholly worthless, for thy head  
Is in the Dragon's maw. Thou mayst behold  
Our gracious, just, young, fair, and courteous Sháh.<sup>1</sup>  
But eating snakes<sup>1</sup> and wearing leopard-skin  
Are sweeter than both colour and brocade  
In thine esteem. None will contest the point,  
And thou wilt eat of that which thou hast sown."

V. 990

Pírán replied: "O fortune's favourite,  
Thou fruitful, flourishing, and goodly Tree!  
Who knoweth of such things as well as thou?  
And may the homage of the chiefs be thine.  
My heart and spirit are at thy command,  
My life for thine, I will advise to-night,  
And will address the assembled host besides."

This being said, to join the troops he went  
With guileful heart and head on vengeance bent.

## § 10

*How the Battle was joined*

Pírán departed and the opposing hosts  
Stood like two glittering mountains on the earth,  
While Rustam thus harangued the Íránians:—  
"My loins are girt for battle, be it yours  
To think but of revenge, and let each warrior  
Frown, for no small strife fronteth us to-day,  
But one that will appraise both wolf and sheep.  
The reader of the stars hath said to me:—  
'My heart is troubled by this coming fight;  
'Twill be betwixt two mountains, troops in mass  
Will bathe the world in blood, the veteran chiefs  
Will gather, and the strife unman the world;  
Then feyd will cease to stalk, the steel mace grow  
Like wax.' Have no misgivings, whosoe'er

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.* suffering trouble and hardship.

V. 991

May come to fight with me, for I will bind  
 His hands within the twisted lasso's coils  
 Although the starry heavens be his ally.  
 Let no one tremble at yon famous chiefs.  
 If my life endeth on the battlefield,  
 And doubtless I shall not die at a feast,  
 All that thou needest is enduring fame,  
 Thou canst not stay, why make so much ado?  
 Set not thy heart upon this Wayside Inn,  
 Trust not a Hostelry so perilous,  
 Where souls allied to wisdom reckon not  
 Their day as good or ill. E'en lords of crown  
 And treasure may not fix their hearts on this  
 Our Wayside Inn."

The troops replied: "Thy hests  
 Are higher than sky and moon, and our keen swords  
 Shall make our fame last till the Judgment Day."

The armies closed. "A black cloud," thou hadst said,  
 "Hath risen raining shafts and scimitars,  
 And all the world is like a sea of pitch."  
 The glorious visage of the sun grew dark  
 With eagles' plumes and arrow-heads of steel.  
 Thou wouldst have said: "Amid the cloud of dust  
 The lances' heads have smirched the stars with gore!"  
 What while the ox-head maces crashed around  
 Thou wouldst have said: "The sky is raining stones!"  
 And midst the flashing of the diamond swords:—  
 "A cloud hath risen and its rain is blood!"  
 The briars and dust were drenched with gore and  
 brains,

V. 992

The helms were smashed upon the wearers' heads.  
 Said gray Gúdarz: "Since first I girt myself  
 To play the man I have seen no such strife,  
 Or heard of such among the haughty chiefs;  
 Such is the slaughter that one half alone  
 Of men is safe, the other is o'erthrown!"

## § 11

*How Shangul fought with Rustam and fled*

Shangul came forth before the host and shouted.

"I vanquish heroes and I love the fray,  
And I will see," he said, "what battle-gear  
Of manliness this man of Sigz possesseth."

The voice reached Rustam, who looked forth, beheld  
him,

And said: "Mine one petition to the Maker,  
Both publicly and privily, hath been  
That of this mighty host some alien  
Might have the pluck to challenge me to fight.  
I will not leave Shangul, the Khán of Chín,  
Or any warrior of Túrán alive."

He came and shouted: "Base-born miscreant!  
Zál named me Rustam; wherefore call'st thou me  
'The man of Sigz?' Know that the man of Sigz  
Will be thy death, thy mail and helm thy shroud."

This said, he grasped a life-destroying spear,  
And urged his heavy mountain of a steed.  
He charged like wind, loosed his heroic arm,  
And thrusting with his spear unhorsed Shangul,  
Dashed him down headlong, and rode over him,  
Yet harmed him not. Then Rustam quickly drew  
His scimitar, but from the hostile host  
Came warriors with swords of tempered steel;  
Men from Túrán, Sakláb, and Hind surrounded  
The paladin as 'twere an onager,  
And snatched Shangul from that fierce Elephant:  
He 'scaped from Rustam, scathless 'neath his mail,  
Fled with a care-worn visage to the Khán,  
And said: "This is no man; he hath no equal  
On earth; he is a furious Elephant  
Upon a Mountain; we may fight in mass,

But let not any one attack the Dragon  
In single combat, for he cannot 'scape."

"This morn thy views and words were other," said  
The Khán, and bade the troops charge mountain-like  
In full force to hem Rustam in and end  
His life. That Lion drew his scimitar,  
And brake the left wing of the host of Chín;  
Each stroke strewed trunkless heads upon the plain.  
No mountain could withstand him in the fight,  
Or elephant his fury. Warriors  
Beset him till they dimmed the sun above him,  
While from the many spears, swords, shafts, and maces,  
Employed against the lion-taking chief,  
One would have thought that he was in a reed-bed,  
And all the realm a winefat running blood.  
At every blow he sliced a hundred spears,  
And as an angry lion roared and raged.  
Behind him came the warriors of Írán  
With vengeful hearts and eager for the fray.  
As for the maces, mallets, spears, and swords,  
Thou wouldst have said: "Hail falleth." Corpses,  
hands,  
Heads, coronets, and helmets of the slain  
Filled all the field, high heaven seemed earth with  
dust,  
And many a neck and breast were cloven piecemeal.  
The troops all cried: "The plain is like a mountain  
With slain!" The hosts of men from Chín and  
Shakn,  
From Hind, Sakláb, Harát, and from Pahlav<sup>1</sup>  
Stretched o'er plain, height, and river, and they all  
Were smitten by one man!

Then to Kulbád  
Pírán turned, saying: "This battlefield hath lost  
Its charms, for he is irresistible;

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 109.

There is no leader like him in the world.  
 No sage would credit that one cavalier  
 O'erthrew three hundred thousand warriors.  
 This feud hath brought ill on Afrásiyáb ;  
 Where will he find repose and rest from Rustam ?  
 Good sooth ! we shall be blamed when he inquireth  
 Concerning this campaign, and then if he  
 Is wroth our heads will be in jeopardy."

## § 12

*How Rustam fought with Sáma*

Said Rustam to the Íránians : " This fight  
 Hath harmed us not. Now will I take from Chín  
 These elephants, this wealth, these splendid crowns,  
 And thrones, bestow them on Írán and make  
 The day a happy and a glorious one.  
 I want no helper from the Íránians,  
 God and the feet of Rakhsh are help enough.  
 I will not leave a man from Chín, Sakláb,  
 And Shahn to set his foot upon the ground,  
 For 'tis our day of victory ; high heaven  
 Illumineth our star, but ill betideth  
 The men of evil words and evil deeds.  
 If God affordeth strength my glossy Rakhsh  
 Shall show his mettle, I will make this plain  
 A graveyard, and the fertile land a salt-marsh.  
 Resume ye now your posts, be diligent,  
 And swift as wind. Attend. When I advance  
 Sound gong and bell, and make the whole earth ebon  
 With dust of cavaliers and tymbal-din.  
 Ply ye your axes and your massive maces,  
 Like blacksmiths' hammers on a mass of steel,  
 And fear ye not the numbers of the foe,  
 But make the very water reek to heaven.

V 993

Cleave ye the ranks of Chín and of Sakláb;  
Earth must not see the sky. Watch well my helm,  
And, when I raise the war-cry, charge amain."

Thence like a raging elephant, and bearing  
His ox-head mace and shouting as he went,  
He sought the foemen's right, and first encountered  
Kundur. He routed that wing utterly,  
And many a head and helmet disappeared.  
A kinsman of Kámús, one Sáwa hight,  
Proud and o'erweening, came to counter Rustam,  
With Indian sword in hand. He wheeled about  
In quest of vengeance for Kámús and cried:—  
"O mighty Elephant! now shalt thou mark  
A wave of Nile!<sup>1</sup> I will avenge Kámús,  
The hapless: nevermore shalt thou see battle."

When Sáwa's words reached Rustam he drew forth  
His massive mace, raised it aloft, and smote  
His foeman's head and helm. Thou wouldst have  
said:—

"That head hath never even seen its body!"  
He flung down Sáwa, and rode over him  
Till every trace was lost. The enemy  
Were panic-struck, the banner of Kashán  
Was overthrown; none durst withstand him more  
Because the hoofs of Rakhsh their fruitage bore.

### § 13

#### *How Rustam slew Gahár of Gahán*

Thence Rustam sought the other wing, while all  
The foe were in dismay, where stood Gahár  
The warrior of Gahán, a lion-man  
Who had a dusky banner. He was wroth

<sup>1</sup> "O éléphant furieux, tu vas voir le tumulte des flots de l'Indus"  
(Mohl).

On seeing Rustam's helm, roared lion-like,  
And said to him: "I will avenge Túrán  
And Chín upon this Sigzian on this field;  
To fight him is my part among the chiefs:  
A lion's heart and massive mace are mine."

He spurred forth to encounter mighty Rustam,  
But turned like flower of fenugreek on seeing  
The helm of Rustam close, and thought: "As well  
Plunge in the river Nile as fight against  
This furious Elephant! Thou saidst: 'The fight  
Will profit thee,' but others said: 'Not so.'  
Both courses are not well. To flee and save  
One's head is better than to have it trampled  
By showing prowess."

V. 997

Then he fled toward  
The centre in the sight of all the troops,  
While like a tree upon a mountain-top  
Rose Rustam's standard mid the host. He followed  
Gahár like dust, earth reddened, air grew dark;  
He speared and pierced the girdle of his foe,  
Rent both the corslet and its clasps, then flung him  
Down as the leafage falleth from a bough  
Struck by a mighty blast. He overthrew  
That dusky flag, and thou hadst said: "Gahár—  
He of Gahán—ne'er lived." The Íránians marked  
That deed, to right and left the dust of battle  
Rose, they advanced the drums and glorious standard,  
Illustrious Gúdarz and Tús came on,  
The trumpets' blare hailed Rustam's victory.  
"Send me a thousand noble cavaliers,"  
He bade, "and I will take yon elephants,  
That ivory throne, the gold, torques, pearls, and crown  
From him of Chín and give them to Írán,  
To the victorious monarch of the brave."

A thousand warriors of Írán advanced  
In mail with ox-head maces. Rustam cried,

V. 998

That they might gird them for revenge : " I swear  
By our Sháh's life and head, the sun and moon,  
Írán's host, and the dust of Siyáwush,  
That if one flee before the prince of Chín  
He shall experience bonds, or pit and gibbet,  
And have a paper cap set on his head."

The troops knew Rustam's lion-appetite,  
Which longed to claw the haunches of the stag,  
And made toward the Khán, men seared in heart,  
Whose leader aimed at crowns. He led the charge,  
Let fleet Rakhsh have the reins, and spurted blood  
Up to the moon. The stars looked down upon  
That battlefield whence such a dust-cloud rose  
That none could see the ground. What with the  
shouts

Of cavaliers and thud of lances none  
Discerned 'twixt rein and stirrup ; thou hadst said :—  
" The sun is veiled, earth tortured 'neath the horse-  
hoofs !"

The air grew black, black as an Ethiop's face ;  
They saw no way for slain ; mails, helms, and saddles  
Filled all the field, and heads farewelled their bodies.  
The horsemen's dust went down the wind, the earth  
Rang with the clash of steel, and many a chief  
Exposed his head for glory. Rustam shouted,  
And thou hadst said : " It is the raging sea !"  
" These elephants, the bracelets, ivory throne,  
Crowns, diadems, and torques will in Írán  
Be worthy Kai Khusrau, the world's young king.  
What business can ye have with crown and pomp,  
Who, spite of all your might and toil and prowess,  
Will only set the shackles on your hands,  
And bring a twisted lasso round your loins ?  
Then will I send you to the king of earth :  
I will not spare Manshúr or yet the Khán  
Of Chín. I give you life and that is all ;

Your crowns and signet-rings are for another ;  
Else with our horse-hoofs I, unless ye yield,  
Will send dust moonward from this battlefield."

V. 999

## § 14

*How the Khân was taken Prisoner*

The Khân let loose his tongue, reviling Rustam.  
"Thou miscreant," he said, "in soul and body!  
For quarter for Írán, its Sháh and people,  
Thou must appeal to me. Thou Sigzian,  
And vilest of mankind ! wouldst seek to make  
A common soldier of the king of Chín ?"

They sent a very grievous rain of arrows  
As when the winds of autumn blast a tree ;  
The air was clothed with eagles' plumes : no warrior  
E'en dreameth of such strife ! Gúdarz, beholding  
That shower of steel, alarmed for Rustam's safety,  
Said to Ruhhám : " O laggard ! tarry not,  
But with two hundred horsemen ply the reins,  
And with your bows of Chách and poplar shafts  
Guard in the battle peerless Rustam's back."  
And then to Gív : " Lead on the host and yield not  
Before our foes. To-day is not a time  
For peace and pageant, leisure or repose.  
Advance toward the right wing with the troops,  
And find out where Pírán is with Húmán.  
Mark how before the Khân the peerless Rustam  
Is dashing heaven to earth ! Ne'er may the eyes  
Be blest that curse him on the day of battle."

Ruhhám raged like a leopard and rushed forth  
To fight at Rustam's back, who said to him,  
That Lion : " My Rakhsh, I fear, hath had enough ;  
When he is weary I will go afoot,  
All blood and sweat. This is a host like ants

V. 1000

And locusts ! Fight against the elephants  
And drivers. We will take them to Khusrau—  
A novel present from Shingán and Chín."

Then from his post he cried : " May Áhriman  
Wed Turkistán and Chín ! Ho ! luckless ones,  
Resourceless, wretched, fed on grief, and lost !  
Have ye ne'er heard of Rustam ? Or hath wisdom  
Fled from your brains ? He holdeth dragon-men  
Of no account, and chooseth elephants  
As opposites. Would ye still fight with me  
Whose only gifts are mace and scimitar ? "

He loosed his twisted lasso from its straps,  
Flung the raw coil upon his saddle-bow,  
And urged his charger on. A shout arose  
To split a dragon's ear. Where'er he cast  
The noose he cleared the ground of mighty men,  
Yet wished he only to contend with Chín  
With lasso on his arm and frowning brow.

V. 1001

Now every time that Rustam in the fight  
Unhorsed a chieftain with the coiling noose,  
The leader Tús sent cloudward from the field  
The sound of trump and drum, while an Íránian  
Made fast the prisoner's hands, and took him off  
Toward the heights. Now when from elephant-back  
The Khán saw earth rise like the Nile, and there,  
Astride a lofty Hill, an Elephant  
That grasped a lasso made of lion's hide,  
And brought down vultures from the murky clouds,  
While stars and moon looked on, he chose a chief,  
Learned in the Íránian tongue, and said : " Approach  
Yon lion-man and say : ' Fight not so fiercely,  
These troops of Chín, of Shakhn, Chaghán, and Wahr  
Have in their hearts no interest in the feud,  
Nor have the kings of Chín and of Khatlán :  
Thou hast no quarrel with these aliens,  
But with Afrásiyáb, who knoweth not

The fire from water, but hath raised the world,  
 And by this war brought evil on himself.  
 We all of us have greed and long for fame,  
 Yet peace still bettereth war."

With fluent tongue

And guileful heart the man drew near to Rustam,  
 And said: "O chieftain, lover of the fray!  
 Since fight is over for thee now seek feast.  
 Thou surely harbourest not revenge at heart  
 For what hath passed against the Khán of Chín!  
 Withdraw as he withdraweth, for the strife  
 Is ended now. When by thy hand Kámús  
 Was slain, the heads of all our chiefs were turned."

V. 1002

But Rustam answered thus: "The elephants,  
 The crown, and ivory throne must all be mine.  
 Ye set your faces to lay waste Írán:  
 What need is there for talk and blandishments?  
 He knoweth that his host is in my hands,  
 And that I check the ardour of mine own.  
 I spare his own head, but his elephants,  
 Torque, crown, and throne of ivory are mine."

The messenger replied: "O lord of Rakhsh!  
 'Spare' not upon the waste the uncaught gazelle!  
 The plain is all men, elephants, and troops.  
 Who hath crown, wealth, and grandeur like the Khán?  
 Who knoweth too the outcome of the day,  
 And who will quit the field with victory?"

When Rustam heard he spurred on Rakhsh and  
 cried:—

"I vanquish lions and apportion crowns,  
 Am strong, and have a lasso on mine arm.  
 Is this the day for jest, the time for counsel?  
 Whenas the Khán of Chín shall see my lasso,  
 When that fierce Lion shall behold mine armlet,  
 He will be taken and distaste e'en life."

He flung the lasso coiled and took the heads

V. 1003

Of cavaliers, neared that white elephant,  
 And then the Khán of Chín, grown desperate,  
 Smote with the goad the creature's head and, roaring  
 Like thunder in the month of Farwardín,  
 Took and hurled forth at Rustam deft of hand  
 A double-headed battle-dart in hope  
 To worst him and to take his noble head ;  
 But Rustam, scathless, flung his lasso high,  
 Dragged from his elephant the Khán of Chín  
 Noosed by the neck, and dashed him to the ground,  
 Where others bound his hands and drove him on  
 Toward the Shahd afoot without his crown,  
 His litter, throne, or elephant, and there  
 They made him over to the guards of Tús ;  
 That chieftain sent the drum-roll to the sky.

This tricky Hostelry is ever so :  
 Whiles it exalteth, whiles it layeth low,  
 And thus it will be while the sky doth move—  
 Whiles strife and poison, and whiles sweets and love.  
 Thou raisest one to heaven on high, and one  
 Thou makest vile, afflicted, and fordone ;  
 From pit to moon, so dost Thou one elate ;  
 From moon to pit, such is another's fate !  
 One hath a throne, one is to fishes hurled  
 In wisdom not caprice, Lord of the world !  
 Thou art the height and depth thereof, I trow  
 Not what Thou art Thyself. Thyself art Thou.

## § 15

*How the Host of the Túrānians was defeated*

V. 1004 Then peerless Rustam seized his massive mace,  
 The great and small were all alike to him ;  
 The battlefield was such that ant and gnat  
 Had scarcely room to stir on plain and dale ;

Blood ran in streams from wounded and from slain  
Flung headlong down or headless. When the foe's  
Bright fortune loured 'twas nearly night, there came  
A blast with murk, light quitted sun and moon,  
And then the foe, not knowing head from foot,  
Took to the desert and the longsome road.  
Pírán beheld that fight and fortune grown  
So gloomy to Manshúr, Fartús, the Khán,  
And Turkman chiefs: saw standards down, the  
wounded

Laid vilely in the dust, and thus he said  
To Nastfhan the warrior and Kulbád :—  
“We must lay by two-headed dart and sword.”

Giv overthrew the sable flag, the foe  
Dispersing by the roads and pathless tracts.  
He routed all the right wing, made the dales  
And plains like feathers of a francolin,  
And sought upon the army's left and right  
To find Pírán, but when they found him not  
The warriors returned to vengeful Rustam.  
The war-steeds were disabled with the work ;  
They all were wounded and fordome with fight.  
The troops went to the mountain well content  
With Rustam and his escort at their head,  
Their bodies injured but their hearts rejoicing  
About the battle, as is this world's use.  
The helms and mail were smirched with blood and  
dust,

The horses' bards were riven. Heads, feet, swords,  
And stirrups were begored, the hills and dales  
Were hidden by the slain, the troops so masked  
That none could know another till they bathed.  
They washed their bodies and forgot their pains  
Because their foes were bound in heavy chains.

## § 16

*How Rustam divided the Spoil*

"Disarm," said Rustam to the Íránians.  
 "Before the All-conquering we need not mace,  
 Or belt or treasure. Stoop ye all your heads  
 To darksome dust, then crown them, for the chiefs  
 Are minished not by one for whom our hearts  
 Would now be mourning. When the tidings reached  
 The world's king he repeated them to me  
 Forthwith: 'The chieftain Tús hath gained the moun-  
                   tains,  
 Defeated by Pírán and by Húmán!'  
 The Sháh's words robbed me of my wits, my brain  
 Seethed for the fray, while for Gúdarz, Bahrám,  
 And for Rívníz my heart turned ebon-black.  
 I sped forth from Írán without delay  
 Intent upon the fight, but when I saw  
 The Khán, the men of name and warriors,  
 Especially Kámús, his Grace and stature,  
 Such shoulders and such limbs, such hands and mace,  
 Why then methought: 'My time is o'er!' For since  
 I girt me as a man I have not looked  
 In my long life on better men or arms  
 Assembled anywhere. I have invaded  
 Mázandarán, a land of dívs, where nights  
 Are dark and maces massive, yet my heart  
 Forwent its courage never and I said:—  
 'I tender neither heart nor life.' Howbeit  
 In this campaign my days were plunged in gloom,  
 My heart—the lustre of the world—was darkened!  
 If now we fall in sorrow in the dust  
 Before all-holy God it will be well,  
 For He hath given strength, success, and aid  
 From Saturn and the sun. Long be it so.

God grant that fear may never fall on us !  
 Let men too bear the Sháh the news forthwith ,  
 Let him adorn his throne, set on his head  
 The royal cap, give great gifts to the poor,  
 And may their blessings be upon his soul,  
 Now put we off our mail and rest in peace.  
 No doubt both grief and longing pass away,  
 And fate is counting up our every breath,  
 But still 'tis good to add up cups of wine,  
 And not to stare at yon unloving sky :  
 Quaff we till midnight then, and let our talk  
 Be of the mighty men, with thanks to God,  
 The Conqueror, from whom are manhood, fortune,  
 And prowess ; we should not possess our hearts  
 Too much in sorrow and laboriousness  
 In this our Wayside Inn."

The nobles blessed him,  
 And said : " May crown and signet lack thee never !  
 All honour to the stock, the native worth,  
 And mother that brought forth a son like thee.  
 A man of elephantine Rustam's strain  
 Is more exalted than the turning sky.  
 Thou knowest what thou hast achieved through love  
 For us. Let heaven rejoice because thou livest.  
 We were as good as slain, our days were done,  
 But now we live and light the world through thee."

Then having bade to fetch the elephants,  
 Crown, ivory throne, and golden torques, he brought  
 Forth royal wine and goblets, and first gave :—  
 " The monarch of the world," and when he grew  
 Blythe in his cups they parted glad and gay.

When Luna rent the robe of night and set  
 Its turquoise throne in heaven the scouts dispersed  
 About the plains and hills, and when the rust  
 Of night's rest passed, when day's bright Falchion  
 showed,

And earth grew jewel-like, the drum-roll rose  
 Before his tent, the chiefs arrived, and Rustam  
 Said: "We have found no traces of Pírán!  
 Return we to the field and send our troops  
 In quest of him."

Bízhan the lion-man  
 Advancing came upon a world of corpses,  
 Of goods, and treasure; all the plain was strewn  
 With wounded men flung down and bound; of others  
 Still living they saw none. Tents and enclosures  
 Filled all the earth, and tidings came to Rustam:—  
 "The foe hath fled the field."

Like lion wroth  
 He raged about the Íránians' sloth and slackness,  
 And said reviling them: "Hath no one wisdom  
 Paired with his brain? How when two mountains thus  
 Shut in our foes could they escape in mass  
 From us? Did not I say: 'Send forward scouts,  
 And make each gorge and dale like plain and waste?'"<sup>1</sup>  
 Ye thought of ease and rest, the foe of toil  
 And march. Slack bodies bring forth care and travail,  
 But he who chooseth labour fruiteth treasure.  
 How can I say: 'I am at ease to-day'?  
 I tremble for Írán."

Then leopard-like  
 He raged at Tús and said: "Is this a bedroom?  
 Or battlefield? See to Húmán, Kulbád,  
 Pírán, Rúfn, and to Púlád thyself  
 Henceforth with thine own host upon this plain:  
 We are not of one province, thou and I.  
 If ye have strength fight on your own account,  
 For how should ye have me, when I have gained  
 The victory and its results are spoiled?  
 See from what company the scouts were drawn,

<sup>1</sup> "Et de convertir en plains les vallées et les ravins en les comblant  
 avec des morts" (Mohl).

And who is head man of the family,  
 And when thou findest any of those scouts  
 Let him be beaten on the feet and hands  
 With sticks, take what he hath, make fast his feet,  
 Set him upon an elephant and thus  
 Dispatch him to the Sháh for execution.  
 The ivory thrones, the jewels, and dínars,  
 Brocade, crowns, treasure, coronets, and all  
 That they took from us, seach for and bring hither,  
 For there were many kings upon this plain ;  
 The most illustrious of the world were here  
 From Chín and from Sakláb, from Hind and Wahr,  
 And all possessed of realms and treasuries.  
 First let us choose a present for the Sháh,  
 And then my portion of the spoils and thine."

Tús and his warriors went and gathered all  
 The golden girdles and the amber crowns,  
 The ivory thrones and the brocade of Rúm,  
 The arrows, the horse-armour, and the bows,  
 The iron maces and the Indian swords,  
 And raised a mountain 'twixt the other two :  
 The troops stood round and gazed. Then had an  
 archer,

V. 1009

A cavalier, broad-chested, strong, and valiant,  
 Shot a four-feathered arrow o'er the heap,  
 The carry had not reached from end to end !  
 When Rustain saw the spoil he stood amazed,  
 And oft invoking the Creator said :—  
 " Our changeful lifetime giveth feast and fight  
 By turns, transferring wealth from host to host.  
 It giveth now with curses, then with blessings ;  
 One gathereth wealth for others to enjoy.  
 Kámús was minded, and the Khán as well,  
 To burn Írán. With these huge elephants,  
 These havings, troops, and stores, their joy was all  
 In them and in their multitudes of men,

And for a while God was not in their thoughts,  
 God who created heaven and earth and time,  
 Much manifest and much mysterious.  
 Their host is not, their goodly wealth is not,  
 Their aims and unjust doings are no more !  
 Now will I send the Sháh these chosen chiefs  
 From every realm on their huge elephants,  
 Together with these golden thrones and crowns,  
 And goods on lusty camels. I will send  
 Such goods as are most worthy to be sent,  
 And journey hence myself with all dispatch  
 To Gang, for heroes cannot brook delay.  
 To spare the guilty and the murderers  
 Is weakness ; let us wash our hands in blood.  
 I will allow the bad no rest but bring  
 The heads of these idolaters to dust,  
 And show to all the way of Holy God."

Gúdarz replied : " O thou of goodly rede !  
 Mayst thou remain till place shall be no more."

Then matchless Rustam sought a messenger  
 To bear the first news to the imperious Sháh,  
 And chose out Faríburz son of Káu's,  
 Commended by his kinship, and thus said :—  
 " Famed chief, of royal race, thyself a king,  
 Accomplished, understanding, nobly born,  
 Both glad thyself and making others glad !  
 Take up a task. Go, bear to our young Sháh  
 My letter, and convey with thee the captives,  
 The camels, and this wealth—all that there is—  
 Torques, treasure, bracelets, crowns, and diadems,  
 The mighty elephants and ivory thrones."

" O raging Lion," Faríburz replied,  
 " My loins are girded even now to ride."

## § 17

*How Rustam wrote a Letter to Kai Khusráu*

Then Rustam summoned an experienced scribe,  
 And wrote a kingly letter in fit terms  
 With ambergris for ink on painted silk ;  
 The letter opened with the praise of God,  
 Who is and who will be for evermore,  
 The Maker of the sun and moon and Saturn ;  
 Of Grace and crown and might the Artist He ;  
 Heaven, earth, and time are His ; the soul and wisdom  
 Obey Him. May He bless the Sháh, and may  
 The age not have him in remembrance only.  
 I came between two mountains as thou badest :  
 The troops of three realms were assembled there.  
 More than a hundred thousand in good sooth  
 Opposed us, men who drew the scimitar—  
 Troops from Kashán and Shahn, from Chín and Hind—  
 A host which stretched from the Indus unto Chín—  
 While from Kashmír to the outskirts of Mount Shahd  
 We saw but litters, tents, and elephants,  
 I feared not for the empire of the Sháh,  
 But slew our foes ; we fought for forty days ;  
 Thou wouldst have said : ' The world is strait to them.'  
 They all were kings with treasures, crowns, and thrones,  
 Now 'twixt the mountains over dale and waste  
 One cannot pass along for blood and slain,  
 And in good sooth for forty leagues the soil  
 Is turned to clay with blood. To tell the whole  
 Were tedious. All the kings that I have bound,  
 Plucked with my lasso from their elephants,  
 Lo ! I have sent the Sháh, with gifts and jewels  
 King-worthy, but war on myself ; perchance  
 Gurwí may meet my sword. His head shall crown  
 My spear in wreck for our Head—Siyáwush.

V. 1011

V. 1012

May every tongue be filled with praise of thee,  
And turning heaven's summit be thine earth."

He gave the letter, when it had been sealed,  
In charge to Fariburz, that royal prince,  
With captive kings and elephants, and set  
The spoils upon three thousand camels' backs.  
So Fariburz son of Káuś went forth  
Rejoicing, and made speed to reach Khusrau.  
The elephantine hero, with the chiefs  
And warriors of the army, saw him off  
With fond embraces when they said farewell,  
While tears rained from the eyelids of the prince.  
Then Rustam, when the dark night's tresses showed,  
Departed on his way toward the host.  
They sat with harp and wine and minstrelsy,  
This reveller with harp and that with pipe,  
Until they went their ways in full content,  
Each to his rest.

Hued like a gold dínár  
Sol burst the Veil of Lapis-lazuli,  
Whereat the clarion's blast rose from the court  
Before the chief's pavilion. Matchless Rustam,  
All ready-girded, mounted his swift steed,  
And bade the soldiers take supplies with them.  
Their way was hard—the longsome desert route.  
They marched to war, and matchless Rustam said  
To Túś and Gív: "Ye gallant chiefs! this time  
Will I fight strenuously and press the foe.  
Who knoweth if this crafty man of Sind  
Will bring a host from Hind, Sakláb, and Chín?  
But I will so bemuse and daze his wits,  
And make his body dust upon the tomb  
Of Siyáwush, that Hind, Shingán, Sakláb,  
And Chín shall bless him nevermore."

He beat

The drums, the dust ascending filled the air,

And earth was full of men,<sup>1</sup> while shouts rose cloudward  
 From those illustrious chieftains keen for fight.  
 They marched two stages from the battlefield  
 Because the ground was blackened with the slain.  
 The chieftain saw a wood and called a halt,  
 And, while his soldiers darkened plain and stream,  
 Indulged in song and wine till some were filled  
 With mirth and pleasure, and some lay bemused,  
 While envoys came from all the districts round,  
 From all the chiefs and men of name, to bring  
 Him presents, arms, and many an offering.

## § 18

*How Kai Khusrâu made Answer to Rustam's Letter*

Heaven turned, some days elapsed, and then one went  
 And told the Íránian monarch: "Fariburz,  
 Son of Káuís, approacheth."

Sháh and chiefs

Went out to welcome him with trumpets, tymbals,  
 And many troops. When Fariburz drew near,  
 And caught sight of the Sháh, he kissed the ground,  
 And offered many praises, saying thus:—  
 "O Sháh of goodly fortune! may high heaven  
 Be glad of heart through thee and may the world  
 Thrive through thy justice," then gave Rustam's letter. V. 1014  
 The king of kings perused it, marvelling  
 At what the chief reported of that fight,  
 Inspected prisoners, camels, elephants,  
 And wounded men, and, having ridden apart,  
 Put off his royal cap, got off his steed,  
 And, wallowing in the dust before his God,  
 Exclaimed: "O holy Ruler of the world!  
 The oppressor wrought on me oppressively,  
 And made me fatherless—all grief and anguish;

<sup>1</sup> "la terre était couverte de morts" (Mehl).

But Thou didst free me from my pains and woes,  
 And give me crown and realm. Both earth and time  
 Became my slaves, the world my treasury ;  
 I offer thanks to Thee, not to the host,  
 But grant me one thing—spare me Rustam's life."

This done, he passed before the elephants,  
 And captives whom he sent to join the wretched  
 In ward, then bade to bear with all dispatch  
 The booty to the treasurer and make ready  
 A pleasant dwelling for the Khán of Chín.  
 He spent a day in writing his response,  
 And set a new Tree in the garth of greatness.  
 He first praised God, the Author of his triumph,  
 "The Master of the sun and turning sky,  
 From Whom are war, alliances, and love,  
 Who hath set up the heaven and graced the earth  
 With night and day, Who giveth unto this  
 So dark a fortune, and to that the throne  
 That he deserveth. Grief and gladness come  
 From Holy God—the Source of courage, awe,  
 And reverence," then said: "O paladin!  
 Be ever pure in body, bright in soul.  
 All that thou spakest of have reached the court—  
 The prisoners, the elephants, the crowns,  
 Brocade of Chín, the thrones of ivory,  
 Arabian steeds, and torques, and diadems,  
 With camels in great plenty, tapestries,  
 And wearing-stuffs, and showers of offerings,  
 To grace our hoektides, feasts, and festivals,  
 What man could wish to meet thee in the fight  
 Unless he was already sick of life?  
 Now of thy toils among Túránian foes,  
 By night and day upon the field, I had  
 Continual news, yet opened not my lips,  
 But night and day before all-holy God  
 Presented broken-hearted my petitions.

He that hath Rustam for his paladin  
 May well continue young; heaven hath no servant  
 Like thee, and may it tender still thy fortune."

V. 1016

The gracious letter being done, and sealed  
 By Kai Khusrau, he bade to be prepared  
 A robe of honour, belts, horse-furniture,  
 A hundred crisp-looking slaves with golden girdles,  
 A hundred noble horses with gold trappings,  
 A hundred camels laden with brocade  
 Of Chín, a hundred more with tapestries,  
 Two rings of shining rubies and a crown  
 Of state compact of gold and lustrous pearls,  
 A suit of royal raiment worked in gold,  
 With armlet, torque, and golden belt, and presents—  
 A treasure in themselves—for every chief.  
 He sent to Fariburz a blue steel sword,  
 A mace, a golden crown, and golden boots,  
 And bade him go to Rustam and say thus:—  
 "We must not pause to rest or eat or sleep  
 In fighting with Afrásiyáb. Perchance  
 Thy lasso yet may take that great king's head."

So far Fariburz resumed his journeying,  
 Such was the pleasure of the Íránian king.

## § 19

*How Afrásiyáb had Tidings of the Case of his Army*

Thereafter tidings reached Afrásiyáb:—  
 "A Flame hath issued from the river Shahd,<sup>1</sup>  
 And in the persons of Kámús, Manshúr,  
 And of the Khán, Túrán hath been o'erthrown.  
 An army came forth from Írán to war  
 Such as left heaven scarce room to turn. The conflict  
 Continued forty days—days dark as night

<sup>1</sup> So Mohl.

V. 1017

Because the horsemen's dust concealed the sun.  
 Our fortune slept, no cavalier of all  
 Our countless host remained still serviceable;  
 Our mighty men and famous paladins  
 Have all been bound in heavy bonds and flung  
 Disgraced upon the backs of elephants  
 Encircled by a host that reached for miles.  
 The Khán of Chín too and the mighty men  
 By thousands have been carried to Írán;  
 There was no room upon the battlefield  
 To pass along, so many were the slain!  
 Pírán, who hath with him a noble army,  
 Hath marched toward Khutan, but none of Chín,  
 Kashán, or Hind is left who hath not read  
 The inscription on the scimitar of Rustam.  
 Now all the marches for two miles and more  
 Are full of blood, the earth is void of chiefs  
 And elephants, while an Íránian host,  
 Led on by matchless Rustam bent on war,  
 Approacheth. If they meet us in the fight  
 Account the hills as plains, the plains as hills."

Heart-stricken and astound, Afrisiyáb  
 Called all his priests and nobles. "From Írán,"  
 He said, "a host hath met our chiefs in battle,  
 Our mighty army with its countless troops  
 And implements of war hath been o'erthrown,  
 While I am prostrate, thou mightst say, with grief  
 Both for Kámús and for the Khán of Chín.  
 Now that so many troops are slain or maimed,  
 The more part of the nobles bound in bonds,  
 What shall we do? What cure shall we apply?  
 We may not treat the matter with light hearts.  
 If Rustam is the chief he will not leave  
 A thorn or weed upon these fields and fells.  
 He was a reed-like stripling when I marched  
 On Rai, yet took me from my saddle so

V. 1018

That warriors wondered. Belt and button broke;  
 I tumbled from his grasp beneath his feet.<sup>1</sup>  
 Such was the prowess that I saw in him!  
 And I have heard reports of his exploits,  
 When single-handed with his massive mace,  
 Against the mighty of Mázandarán,  
 As well as of the havoc wrought by him  
 On our own chiefs in this last battlefield."

The nobles rose and said: "Although the famous  
 Of Chín and of Sakláb have fought Írán  
 Our realm is scathless and our host intact.  
 Why stimulate the foe by fearing Rustam?  
 We all must die, our loins are girt not loosed,  
 And Rustam, if he trample on our land,  
 Shall pay the penalty, for when we arm  
 For vengeance no Íránian will survive."

He heard, preferred those valiant with their tongues,  
 And called to him his chiefs, refrained from sleep,  
 Repose, and feast, unlocked his treasury  
 And gave out pay; his griefs inspired his soul.  
 Earth was so full of troops that one might say:—  
 "The starry sky hath come down to the fray."

## § 20

*How Rustam fought with Káfúr the Man-eater*

This coil of ill grew clear as Fariburz,  
 Glad-hearted, with the monarch's robe of honour,  
 And with the crown with earrings,<sup>2</sup> came to Rustam,  
 Whereat that elephantine hero joyed.  
 The great men of the army met and praised  
 The paladin: "May earth be prosperous  
 Through Rustam, be the Sháh's life glad, and may  
 Írán still flourish, field and fell, through him."

V. 1019

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. i. p. 374, and Vol. II. p. 14.<sup>2</sup> The crown of state. See p. 241.

Thence Rustam led the army on its march,  
 Reached Sughd and spent two sennights there, engaged  
 In hunting onager and quaffing wine,  
 And in such pleasures fled time a while.  
 On marching one stage thence he saw a city  
 By name Bídád <sup>1</sup>—a hold inhabited  
 By folk whose only food was human flesh.  
 The lovely there were ever perishing,  
 While at the table of a king so loathly  
 The flesh of growing youths alone was served.  
 Those slaves that were the goodliest, and were  
 Unblemished in their faces and their forms,  
 Supplied the provand for the monarch's board;  
 Such was his food. The peerless Rustam called  
 Three thousand cavaliers all clad in mail  
 On barded steeds and sent them to that hold  
 With Gustaham and two more valiant chiefs;  
 Btżhan the son of Gív was one, Hajír <sup>2</sup>  
 The other—both redoutable in fight.  
 The king's name was Káfúr; he held the city  
 By patent. When he heard that from Írán  
 A host, led by a famed and warlike chief,  
 Approached, he armed as did his pard-like people,  
 Who were skilled lasso-flingers, cavaliers,  
 And Stones and Anvils in the fray. Káfúr  
 Encountered Gustaham; the armies closed;  
 'Twas such a fight as when a lion chargeth  
 Upon a deer; full many Íránians  
 Were slaughtered and keen fighters turned their heads.  
 When Gustaham saw this, and that the world  
 Was in that curst div's hand, he bade his troops  
 To shower shafts—the horseman's ambushade.  
 Káfúr said to his chiefs: "No arrow-head  
 Will dent an anvil. Ply sword, mace, and lasso,  
 And take yon leaders' heads within the noose."

<sup>1</sup> *Id.* "Unjust."<sup>2</sup> Reading with P.

Awhile they fought so that the stream flashed fire,  
And many of the Iránians were slain;  
A sky of bale turned o'er them. Gustaham  
Said to Bizhan in haste: " Ride hence. Tell Rustam :—  
' Pause not, but come with ten score cavaliers.' "

V. 1021

Bizhan the son of Giv went off like wind,  
And told the matter to the matchless one,  
Whose stirrups felt his weight as with his men  
He rode, who heeded neither hill nor dale.  
He reached the field of battle, as it were  
A torrent rushing from the gloomy hills,  
And shouted to Káfúr: " Unskillful knave!  
Now will I bring thy fighting to an end."

Káfúr came rushing with a furious charge  
Against the royal and fruit-bearing Tree,  
And hurled his sword, as though it were an arrow,  
To strike the lion-taking chief, but Rustam  
Received it on his shield and took no harm.  
Káfúr next flung his lasso o'er the son  
Of Zal, who ducked his head. Then Rustam raised  
His war-cry like an angry elephant,  
Whereat Káfúr stood still in blank amaze,  
And Rustam smote his head-piece with the mace,  
Which smashed together helmet, head, and neck:  
His brains ran down his nostrils, and Káfúr  
The warrior fell. Then Rustam, slaughtering still  
Without distinction as to great or small,  
Charged at the castle-gate, but those within  
Made fast the portal, poured down showers of arrows,  
And called to him: " O man of strength and sense,  
Thou Elephant arrayed in leopard's hide!  
What did thy father name thee at thy birth?  
' The lasso-flinger,' or ' The sky of fight ' ?  
Alas for all thy toil against this city!  
Its name is ' Warstead ' with the knowing ones.  
When Túr the son of Faridún had left

V. 1022

Írán he called men skilled in every way,  
 And by their aid began to build these walls  
 Of stones and timber, brick and reeds, thus built them  
 By toil and sorcery, expending toil  
 And draining treasury, and gallant men  
 Have striven much to send up dust therefrom,  
 But none hath mastered them or profited.  
 Here are munitions and abundant food,  
 With subterranean ways to bring in more.  
 Though thou mayst toil for years thou wilt get naught  
 But strife, for catapults reach not these walls,  
 Fenced by Túr's magic and the breath of priests."

Now Rustam when he heard grew full of thought,  
 His battle-loving heart was like a thicket,  
 Such fighting liked him not, he brought up troops  
 From every side, here was Gúdarz, there Tús  
 With trumpets, drums, and elephants behind;  
 The army from Zábúl was on the third side,  
 Mail-clad and armed with falchions of Kábúl.  
 The veteran Rustam took his bow in hand,  
 And all the fortress stood astound at him  
 As he picked off the head of every one  
 Who showed himself above the battlements:  
 The shaft-points whispered secrets to those brains—  
 An intercourse that made no harmony.  
 In order to dislodge the garrison  
 He undermined the walls, propped them with posts  
 Smeared with black naphtha and, when half way round,  
 Set them on fire. He brought Túr's ramparts down:  
 The troops advanced on all sides. Rustam bade:—  
 "On to the assault; ply bow and poplar shaft."

The brave defenders threw away their lives  
 With one accord to save their treasured wealth,  
 Their children and their country and their kin:  
 Far better for them had they ne'er been born!  
 The Íránian warriors advanced on foot,

And took their bows and arrows, and their shields,  
Advanced supported by the javelin-men,  
And led on by Bízhan and Gustaham.  
The raging of the fire and shower of shafts  
Left no resource but flight, and those that passed  
The castle-walls fled weeping o'er the plain.  
Then the besiegers barred the castle-gate  
And set themselves to pillaging and slaughter.  
What multitudes they slew ! How many old  
And young they carried captive from the city !  
Much silver, gold, and other precious things,  
With beasts and slaves—both boys and girls—the  
Íránians

Bore off with them, and marched back to the camp.  
The matchless Rustam, having bathed and prayed,  
Said to the Íránians : " God must have in store  
Still better things than these ; give praise to Him  
For victory and benefits vouchsafed."

With one consent the great men laid their faces  
Upon the ground and offered thanks to God,  
Then lauded Rustam : " Thine inferior,"  
They said, " might sit contented with his fame ;  
Thou with thine elephantine form, thy pluck,  
And lion's claws hast never fight enough !"

The peerless Rustam said : " This strength and Grace  
Are gifts from God ; ye also have your shares,  
And none can blame the Maker of the world."

He bade Gív, with ten thousand buckler-men,  
On barded steeds to haste and stay the Turkmans  
From massing on the marches of Khutan.  
When night revealed its dusky curls, and when  
The moon's back bent with trouble, Gív departed  
With those brave cavaliers and spent three days  
In raiding, then, what time the sun displayed  
Its crown and mounted on its ivory throne,  
Returned with many noble warriors captive,

With many fair-cheeked Idols of Taráz,  
 With noble horses, and all kinds of arms.  
 Then Rustam sent a portion to the Sháh,  
 And gave the rest as booty to the host.  
 Gúdarz, Tús, Gív and Gustaham, Ruhhám,  
 Shídúsh the valiant and Gív's son Bízhan  
 Thereafter rose and lauded him anew.  
 Thus spake Gúdarz: "Exalted one! thy love  
 Is needful to the world. We may not open  
 Our lips by night or day henceforward save  
 To praise thee. Live glad and bright-souled for ever,  
 Still old in wisdom and still young in fortune.  
 God gave thee purity of race; like thee  
 No one hath e'er been born of stainless mother.  
 May sire succeed to sire and son to son,  
 This native worth ne'er fail. Thou needest naught,  
 Art favoured by the stars, and chief of nobles.  
 Thy refuge be the Master of the world,  
 Be earth and time thy partisans. Whoever  
 Hath travelled o'er earth's surface and beheld  
 The world and peace and battle and revenge,  
 Hath nowhere seen a better host than this,  
 Nor ever heard from time-worn archimages  
 Of such kings, elephants, and ivory thrones,  
 Such men and steeds, such treasure and such crowns,  
 And yet the stars saw it discomfited!  
 We pondered but saw none to work our cure  
 Till, as we cried out in the Dragon's breath,  
 Thy bow delivered us. Crown of Írán,  
 The Stay of chieftains, and pre-eminent,  
 Art thou. We are thy lieges. God reward thee,  
 And ever keep the smiles upon thy face.  
 Repay we cannot, we can only praise."

Then peerless Rustam lauded them: "May earth,"  
 Said he, "be peopled always with the brave.  
 The nobles of Írán are my support—

My bright heart witnesseth to what I say—  
My cheek is freshened by your goodly faces,  
My spirit is made radiant by your love."

He added: "We will tarry here three days,  
Rejoicing and illumining the world,  
But march to battle with Afrásiyáb  
Upon the fourth and set the streams afire."

In full assent arose the company,  
And called for wine and harp and minstrelsy.

V. 1026

## § 21

*How Afrásiyáb had Tidings of the Coming of Rustam*

Afrásiyáb had tidings: "Rustam cometh  
To battle swiftly"—news that wrung his heart  
While all his silken raiment turned to thorns.  
He said: "Who can assay to combat Rustam?  
Troops are enough, but where is a commander?  
What man can go and challenge him to battle,  
For havoc clingeth to his glittering sword?"

The host said: "Shun not fight with him so much,  
For thou art one that in the dust of strife  
Canst send the wave of carnage to the moon.  
There is no stint of treasure, arms, and men;  
Why let the quest of battle grieve thy heart?  
Be not concerned because thou hast to fight  
This cavalier; look at our gallant troops!  
Grant him all iron and brave; he is but one.  
Enough of him. Prepare the remedy  
With thine own army, and bring down his head  
From cloud to dust; that done, we need not fear  
Sháh or Írán. Then Kai Khusrau, his throne,  
The country of Írán and bough on tree  
Will cease to flourish. Mark this noble host,  
These youths war-worthy. We for land and child,

V. 1027

For wife and kindred, will give up our lives  
Before we yield our country to the foe."

Now when Afrásiyáb had heard those words  
He put that ancient battle from his thoughts,<sup>1</sup>  
Both for his fatherland and his own sake  
He took a fresh resolve and made reply:—  
"I will bring forth the implements of war  
Since matters press, permit not Kai Khusráu  
To rest upon his throne, glad and rejoicing  
In fortune, but by long contention bring  
The head of Rustam of Zábul to dust.  
I will not spare my grandson or his troops,  
But lay this quarrel with the scimitar."

He gave commandment to array the host,  
And march forth to new wars. The nobles blessed him,  
And called the chiefs to vengeance. There was one,  
A man of lion-heart by name Farghár,  
Quick to discern the cage and shun the springe.  
The king, who had observed and everywhere  
Approved his feat of arms, put strangers forth,  
And said to him: "O noble man! now seek  
The Íránian host and spy on warlike Rustam.  
Observe his horsemen's numbers and equipment,  
And who of ours is acting as their guide.  
Mark their war-elephants, their warriors,  
And all about their host both good and bad."

V. 1028

Farghár departed to his work as spy  
Upon the Íránians, while the ambitious king,  
Absorbed in care, denied himself to strangers,  
And summoned his son Shida for consult.  
"O thou," he said, "who art endowed with wisdom!  
When will thy troops be here to share thy cares?  
Know that yon countless army, which hath come  
With all those cavaliers to fight with us,

<sup>1</sup> The battle in which he had encountered Rustam. See p. 243.  
Mohl translates "oubliâ les anciennes guerres."

Is led by Rustam of the lion-heart,  
 Whose scimitar converteth dust to clay.  
 Kámús, Manshúr, the Khán of Chín, Gahár,  
 The glorious Fartús, Kundur, Shangul—  
 The king of Hind—an armament that stretched  
 Down to the river Indus from Kashmir—  
 Are slain or captive through the victory  
 Of lion-taking Rustam. Forty days,  
 With lulls at whiles, they fought but Rustam triumphed,  
 Dragged with his lasso from their elephants  
 Our warriors and bound them. Cavaliers  
 And nobles from all climes, the mighty leaders,  
 The arms and ivory throne, steeds, crowns, and camels  
 Dispatched he to Írán, and by that token  
 Is now invading us with his proud chiefs  
 And famous men. I shall not leave my throne,  
 Or much wealth here with fortune so inconstant,  
 But send my treasures, crowns, belts, golden torques,  
 And bucklers to the banks of the Almás :  
 This is no time for joyance, harp, and song.  
 I dread deft-handed Rustam, who is safe  
 E'en in the gullet of a crocodile ;  
 He is not human on the day of battle,  
 He writheth not when hit nor crieth out  
 For pain, he feareth not spear, sword, and arrow,  
 Or maces raining from this ancient sky !  
 ' He is of brass and iron,' thou wouldst say,  
 ' And not of man's race but an Áhriman !'  
 So mighty are his arms on days of fight  
 That earth's back wearieth with the weight thereof !  
 He weareth chain-mail, breast-plate, tiger-skin,  
 And helm ; he roareth like a thunder-cloud !  
 Huge elephants sustain not his attack.  
 Or ships upon the azure sea<sup>1</sup> his weapons !  
 The Mountain under him is swift as wind,

V. 1029

<sup>1</sup> " Sur les flots de l'Indus " (Mohl).

And, thou wouldst say, 'begotten by the sky.'  
 Swift as gazelle and terrible as lion  
 It goeth gallantly at height and river,  
 And would, I dare affirm, fare like a ship  
 If put upon its mettle. Oft have I  
 Contended with its rider, but his breast-plate  
 Is made of leopard-skin, which foiled my weapon  
 Though I tried ax and arrow many a time;  
 But now by way of proof I will to war  
 Once more to see if fortune favoureth us,  
 And so if God affordeth us His aid,  
 And if high heaven revolveth as we would,  
 We will not leave Írán or Sháh: perchance  
 It may be mine to terminate this feud,  
 While should the might of Rustam's hand prevail  
 I will betake me o'er the sea of Chín  
 Betimes and leave these marches of Túrán  
 To him."

Then Shída answered: "Prudent king:  
 Live happily while crown and throne endure.  
 Thou hast Grace, wisdom, lofty mien, high birth,  
 And fortune, heart, and manhood, thou dost need  
 No monitor, yet heed this turn of fate:  
 Men like Pirán, Húmán, and Farshídward,  
 Kulbád and Nastibán have had their armour  
 Destroyed, and their hearts shattered, in the fight:  
 Thou wouldst have said: 'Their grief hath broken  
 them.'

Launch not thy vessel while these war-winds blow,  
 Since thou art ware that this great host hath come.

V. 1030

Thou art the warrior-king experienced  
 And tried in war; now by thy life and head,  
 By sun and moon, by throne and cap, I swear  
 This matter of Kámús and of the Khán  
 Hath filled my heart with pain, my head with vengeance.

Our business is to lead the host to Gang,  
 Not contemplating battle but to call  
 An army up from Chín and from Máchín,  
 And after that o'erthrow the enemy."

When he had spoken he withdrew to rest,  
 Haste in his head and vengeance in his heart.

The dark night oped its melancholy eyes,  
 The moon had grown round-shouldered with distress,  
 And all the world resembled sable musk  
 What time Farghár came from the Íránian host.  
 He reached the presence of Afrásiyáb  
 By night—the time for quiet and repose—  
 And thus reported: 'From this lofty court  
 I went to Rustam, binder of the Dív.  
 I saw a camp-enclosure green and vast  
 With cavaliers resembling ravening wolves.  
 A standard stood erect charged with a dragon;  
 Thou wouldst have said: 'It is alive!' There stood  
 Within the tent a huge, fierce Elephant,  
 Whose girded waist was like a tiger's loins.  
 Before him was a steed, a piebald bay;  
 Thou wouldest say: 'It never taketh rest.'  
 The bridle hung down from the saddle-bow,  
 A coiled hide-lasso from the saddle-straps.  
 The chiefs were such as Tús, Gúdarz, and Gív,  
 And Farfburz, Gurgín, and brave Shídúsh.  
 Guráza is the scout with Gustaham  
 Accompanied by Gív and by Bízhan."

The king grieved at the tidings of Farghár.  
 Then came one to Afrásiyáb to say:—

"Pírán the chieftain hath arrived like dust  
 With great men and with warriors of the fight."

The king told what Farghár had said and asked:—  
 "Who is a match for Rustam in the fray?"

Pírán said: "What resource have we in war  
 Except the quest of glory on the field?"

So let us struggle for our fatherland,  
Our children, and our kin."

Afrásiyáb

Thereat grew instant to engage and bade  
Pírán march forth 'gainst battle-loving Rustam.  
They left the presence and went forth to war  
Upon the plain, shouts rose, the tymbals sounded,  
The troops' dust turned the world to ebony.  
So mighty was the host that thou hadst said :—  
"The whole world will be hidden by the dust!"  
The tymbal-players sent their din on high  
As elephant on elephant filed by.

§ 22

*Afrásiyáb's Letter to Púládward*

Afrásiyáb set forward from his palace,  
And hasted bent on vengeance to the waste.  
He gave all needful orders to Pírán,  
And then withdrawing cleared his tent of strangers.  
They set a scribe before him. "Write," said he,  
"A letter unto Púládward and make  
The matter known. First praise All-holy God,  
Who stablisheth and overthroweth us—  
The Lord of Saturn and the turning sky,  
The Lord of Venus and the shining sun.  
Give praise next to that binder of the strong—  
The fortunate chieftain Púládward, declare  
What we have suffered from this famous fighter,  
And these renowned and all-accomplished chiefs,  
From Tús, Gúdarz, and other warriors.  
Then tell him all about my grandson's case—  
The master of Írán, the mighty Sháh—  
Whom erst I cherished like dear life itself  
That no ill blast might reach him. Then proceed :—  
Now, if high heaven taketh side with us,

Let Púládward come hither. Many troops  
Brought from the marches of Sakláb and Chín  
Have been o'erthrown and writhe, much field and fell  
Been harried by the warriors of Írán.  
Their host is like a moving hill, their chiefs  
Are such as Rustam who is in command,  
Gúdarz the warrior and Giv and Tús:  
They raise the din of tymbals to the clouds.  
When Rustam, who alone hath vexed our land,  
Shall have been slain by thee no host will come  
Against it. Be thou our deliverer.  
If by thy hand his term shall reach its end  
The face of earth will surely be at rest,  
Then from my populous kingdom will I take  
But one half of my treasures as my share;  
The other half, and half my crown, are thine,  
Since both the fight and toil are thine to-day.' "

They sealed the letter with the royal seal,  
And Shída, as the moon arose in Cancer,  
Girt up himself in presence of his father  
To go grief-laden on the embassy.  
He came to Púládward as swift as fire  
Through apprehension of calamity,  
Saluted him, delivering the letter  
And telling Rustam's deeds. Now Púládward,  
A king whose aspirations reached high heaven,  
Lived in the mountain-parts of Chín and had  
No peer in all the land. He lacked not troops  
And men of war; he was a Crocodile;  
His troops were pards. He called his governors  
And priests, and held discourse with them at large,  
Told what the letter said and, being a prince  
Both youthful and imperious, commanded  
To bear the drums and camp-enclosure forth  
Upon the plain. He gathered troops and dívs.  
The battle-cry went up. He led the way,

Equipped with shield, with quiver, and with lasso,  
 And followed by his standard. He descended  
 The mountains, crossed the water, and drew near  
 Afrásiyáb, at whose gate tymbals sounded,  
 And all went forth to welcome Púládwand.  
 The veteran monarch first embraced the chief,  
 Then spake much of the past, told whence arose  
 The Turkmans' trouble and the remedy.  
 While going to the palace they considered  
 V. 1034 New stratagems. Afrásiyáb discussed  
 The waiting and the forward policies,  
 Told of the strife and outcry that had come  
 Upon him through the death of Siyáwush,  
 Told of the Khán, Manshúr, and brave Kámús,  
 Recalling what had passed, and said: "My pain  
 Is all through one who weareth leopard-skin.  
 Mine arms are impotent on him and on  
 That hide, that helmet, and that shield of Chín.  
 Plains hast thou trodden and a longsome road:  
 Now fashion us a remedy for this."

The mind of Púládwand grew full of thought  
 How this knot should be loosed. He made reply:—  
 "We must not hurry in so great a war.  
 This is the self-same Rustam that laid waste  
 And took Mázandarán with his huge mace,  
 Who rent the White Dív's side, the liverstead  
 Of Bíd, and of Púlád son of Ghundí.  
 I have not prowess to contend with him,  
 Or power enough to frustrate his attack;  
 Still let my body and my soul await  
 Thy will, may wisdom ever be thy guide.  
 Do thou incite the host against his host,  
 Our numbers may bewilder him, and I  
 Will plan a stratagem, for otherwise  
 We have not strength to break his breast and neck."  
 Afrásiyáb grew blythe of mind and brought

Bright wine and harp and lyre, When Púládward  
 Was in his cups he roared out to the king :—  
 " Dark to Jamshíd, Zakhák, and Farídún  
 Made I their provand, slumber, and repose :  
 The Brahman hath been frightened at my voice,  
 And this my noble host, and I will hew  
 To pieces with my trenchant sword amain  
 This Zábuk upon the battle-plain ! "

## § 23

*How Púládward fought with Giv and Tús*

As soon as Sol displayed its shining flag,  
 And night's deep violet silk grew safflower-hued,  
 Drums sounded from the portal of the king,  
 The troops' shouts reached the clouds, and Púládward  
 Of lusty form with lasso on his arm  
 Led on the troops.

V. 1035

When both the hosts were ranked  
 The air turned violet-dim, the earth was darkened.  
 Then matchless Rustam donned his tiger-skin,  
 And, mounted on his huge, fierce Elephant,<sup>1</sup>  
 Raged and assailed the right wing of the foe,  
 O'erthrowing many a Turkman warrior.  
 This Púládward descried and, having loosed  
 His twisted lasso from the saddle-straps,  
 Encountered Tús like some mad elephant,  
 With lasso on his arm and mace in hand ;  
 He seized Tús by the girdle, easily  
 Dismounted him, and dashed him to the ground.  
 Giv, when he looked upon the fight and saw  
 The head of Tús son of Naudar o'erthrown,  
 Urged on Shabdiz, devoting soul and body  
 To fight, and mailed, armed with an ox-head mace,  
 Strove like a savage lion with the div,

<sup>1</sup> Rakhsch.

V. 1036

Who flung his lasso round his foeman's head.  
 Ruhhám was with Bízhan; they both observed  
 The mace, the prowess, and dexterity  
 Of Púládwand, and went to bind his hands  
 With lassos, but that wary warrior  
 Urged on his steed and raised his battle-cry.  
 Those two brave warriors of noble birth,  
 Those haughty Lions casting such long shadows,  
 He flung to earth, and trampled on in scorn,  
 In sight of all the horsemen on the plain,  
 And reaching Káwa's standard clave the staff  
 Asunder with his sword. The Íránians wailed,  
 No warrior stood his ground upon the field.  
 When Fariburz, Gúdarz, and the other chiefs  
 Beheld the traces of that warrior-div  
 They said to Rustam, that avenging one :—  
 "There is not left upon this battlefield  
 A single man of name still in the saddle,  
 Or horseman of the warriors of this host,  
 Whom Púládwand hath brought not to the ground  
 With arrow or with lasso, mace or sword !  
 The field of battle is a field of woe,  
 And 'tis for Rustam to deliver us."

Anon arose a cry of pain and grief  
 From both the wings and centre; then Gúdarz,  
 The man of eld, supposing that Bízhan,  
 The lion-taking chieftain, and Ruhhám,  
 His offspring both, had perished in the fight,  
 Cried in his anguish to the righteous Judge :—  
 "I had so many sons and grandsons once  
 That I extolled my head above the sun,  
 But they are slain before me in the wars,  
 So greatly have my day and fortune changed !  
 Slain in their youth while I live on hoar-headed !"

He doffed his casque, he laid his girdle by,  
 And then began to wail right bitterly.

## § 24

*How Rustam fought with Púládward*

Now Rustam when he heard was sorely grieved,  
 He shook as 'twere a bough upon a tree,  
 And drawing near to Púládward, and seeing  
 His mountain-height grieved for those gallant four  
 Like onagers contending with a lion,  
 Saw one host sorely stricken and the other  
 Unbroken, and he thought: "Our day hath darkened,  
 Our nobles' heads are dazed! Good sooth! the strife  
 Hath turned against us and our fortune sleepeth!"

V. 1037

Then gripping with his legs he urged on Rakhsh,  
 And raging challenged Púládward to fight.  
 Exclaiming: "O thou ill-conditioned div!  
 Thou shalt behold a change of fortune now."

The voice of Rustam reached those warriors,  
 And he, perceiving them dismounted, said:—  
 "O Thou Almighty Ruler of the world!  
 Thou art above the unseen and the seen.  
 Far rather would I lose mine eyes in battle  
 Than look upon this miserable day,  
 Whereon such cries have risen from Írán,  
 Such from Húmán, Pírán, and yon fierce div!  
 Gív and Ruhhám and Tús are all unhorsed,  
 And e'en Bizhan who used to mock at lions!  
 The chargers of the great are pierced with arrows,  
 The riders fight afoot as best they may."

Then closing with the div he threw his lasso,  
 But Púládward, brave horseman though he was,  
 Ducked in alarm, he had had fight enough;  
 But when the cast had failed and he was safe  
 He said to Rustam: "O thou gallant one,  
 Thou veteran Lion and illustrious,  
 Who scarest mighty elephants! ere long

v. 1038

Thou shalt behold the billows of the deep.  
 Consider now the fire of mine attack,  
 My lasso, courage, might, and enterprise.  
 Thou shalt behold no traces of thy Sháh,  
 His nobles, or his mighty men henceforth,  
 Or of thy land, unless in dream, for I  
 Will give thine army to Afrásiyáb."

"How much more shirking, blustering, and guile?"  
 Said Rustam. "Let no warrior play the shrew  
 Or he will give his head up to the winds  
 Assuredly. Though thou be brave and proud  
 Thou art not Sám nor yet stiff-necked Garshásp."

Then Púládward recalled a saw of old :—  
 "They who unjustly seek to cause a fight  
 Return with livers pierced and faces white ;  
 If friend or foe harm thee 'tis well thou still  
 Do thy devoir alike to good and ill."  
 He thought : "This is that Rustam who o'ercame  
 By night with his huge mace Mázandarán,"  
 And then he said : "O man approved in war !  
 Why stand we here so long to no result ?"

Two mighty Elephants, two warlike Lions,  
 Were they ; they wheeled, the dust rose from the waste,  
 And elephantine Rustam with his mace  
 Struck his foe's head : all present heard the crash.  
 Such darkness filled the eyes of Púládward  
 That he relaxed his hold upon his bridle,  
 And, swerving to the right hand in his pain,  
 Exclaimed : "An ill day this !"

Now matchless Rustam—  
 Looked for the brains of Púládward to pour  
 From both his ears but, since he kept his seat,  
 Invoked the Maker of the world and said :—  
 "O Thou exalted over fortune's wheel,  
 The Lord, the All-seeing, and the Nourisher !  
 If I am fighting in an unjust cause

My spirit doteth not upon this world ;  
 But if the wrong is with Afrasiyáb  
 Deprive me not of strength and skill in arms.  
 It is not meet that thou shouldst loose my soul  
 From bondage by the hand of Púládward,  
 For if I am to perish by his prowess  
 No warrior will remain throughout Írán,  
 No husbandman and no artificer,  
 No dust, no country, and no field or fell."

V. 1039

He said to Púládward: "What harm hast thou  
 Got from the whirling mace? Thy hands relax  
 Thy sable reins. Down, div! and beg thy life."

He said: "Thy mace hath harmed me not."

They closed,

And Púládward employed his sword of steel  
 With many a feint and many an artifice,  
 But failed to pierce through Rustam's tiger-skin,  
 Which filled the liver of the div with blood.  
 That fierce one raged at fate because his sword  
 Availed not on his foeman; he was troubled  
 At Rustam's neck and shoulders, and again  
 Spake to him: "Doff this tiger's legacy,  
 This armour, with that sable helm of thine,  
 And put on others. I will do the like,  
 And come with speed."

But Rustam said: "Not so.  
 That is no channel for a warrior's stream.  
 I will not change my gear, do thou keep thine."

Then both the warriors wheeled till Púládward,  
 Whose massive mace fell but without effect  
 On Rustam's tiger-skin and coat of steel,  
 Said: "Wrestling is the test 'twixt man and man.  
 Take we each other by the leathern belt,  
 That we may know which one the will of fate  
 Dismisseth worsted from the battlefield."

V. 1040

Then Rustam said: "O ill-conditioned div!

Thou canst not stand a warrior's blow, but like  
 A fox employest craft. What profit is it  
 To have thy head ensnared? Hast wile or spell  
 In wrestling that will free that neck of thine  
 From mine encircling arms?"

They made a pact  
 That none should interfere from either side,  
 Then, lighting from their chargers, both the foes  
 Took time wherein to breathe them and repose.

## § 25

*The Wrestling of Rustam and Púládward*

These two exalted warriors bent on fight  
 Prepared themselves to wrestle, and agreed:—  
 "No one on either side shall intervene."  
 The space between the hosts was half a league.  
 The stars surveyed that fight as Púládward  
 And matchless Rustam—those grim Lions—closed,  
 Who felt each other, then each warrior  
 Seized his opponent by the leathern belt.

V. 1041

When Shída looked on Rustam's chest and neck  
 He drew a deep, cold sigh and thus bespake  
 His sire Afrásiyáb: "This mighty man,  
 Whom thou call'st Rustam, binder of the Dív,  
 Will by his strength and prowess lay the head  
 Of our brave warrior-dív upon the dust,  
 And thou wilt see our soldiers take to flight,  
 So strive not vainly with the turning sky."

The sire replied: "My brain is fraught with care  
 On that account, go and observe the prowess  
 Of Púládward in wrestling. Speak to him  
 In Turkman and advise him. He may get  
 The elephantine Rustam off his feet.  
 Tell Púládward: 'When thou hast got him down  
 Let thine appeal be to the scimitar.'"

But Shida said : " This is not what the king  
Agreed to in the presence of the host.  
If thou art rash and breakest covenant  
Thy warfare will not issue in success.  
Befoul not this clear stream, else he that loveth  
Fault-finding will discover cause for blame."

Afrásiyáb began to chide, becoming  
In his fierce wrath distrustful of his son,  
And said to him : " If Púládward the div  
Shall be o'erthrown by this antagonist  
None will remain alive upon the field ;  
Thou hast a valiant tongue, no prowess else."

He plied his reins and came forth lion-like  
Upon the ground, observed the strife and shouts  
Like thunder, then he said to Púládward :—  
" If thou, exalted Lion ! gett'st him down  
In wrestling rip him open with thy dagger ;  
We need not boasting but accomplishment."

Giv marked the king's wild words and eagerness,  
Then urging on his charger came in haste,  
Because the enemy had broken troth,  
And said to Rustam : " O thou warrior !  
What orders givest thou thy servants ? Speak !  
Observe Afrásiyáb, his eagerness,  
And wild words ! He hath come forth to inflame  
The heart of thine antagonist and prompt him  
To use his dagger in a wrestling-bout !"

But Rustam said : " A man of war am I,  
And, when engaged in wrestling, bide my time.  
What do ye fear ? Why are your hearts thus  
rent ?

E'en now will I bring down from heaven above  
The head and neck of Púládward to dust ;  
But if I have not strength of hand therefor  
What need thus wantonly to break my heart ?  
Although this witless warlock doth transgress

The covenant of God, why should ye fear  
The breach? He poureth dust on his own head."

Then, like a lion, reaching out he clutched  
The chest and neck of that fierce Crocodile,  
And, straining hard, uprooted Púládwand,  
As though he were a plane-tree, from his place,  
Raised him aloft, dashed him upon the ground,  
And uttered praises to Almighty God.  
A shout rose from the army of Írán;  
The drummers marched out with the kettle-  
drums;

The blast of clarion, the clang of gong  
And Indian bell ascended to the clouds.  
Now Rustam thus imagined: "Púládwand  
Hath not a sound joint in his body left,  
His bones are broken and his cheeks become  
The colour of the bloom of fenugreek,"  
So flung his leg across the gallant Rakhsh,  
And left the Dragon's body as it lay;  
But, when the lion-clutching hero reached  
His army, Púládwand glanced arrow-like,  
And fled with all speed to Afrásiyáb  
With full heart and with tears upon his face.  
When Rustam saw that Púládwand still lived,  
And troops were everywhere upon the plain,  
His heart grew straitened, he led on the host,  
Called unto him the veteran Gúdarz,  
And ordered: "Let them send a shower of arrows,  
And make the air as 'twere a cloud in spring."

Bízhan was on one wing, Gív on the other  
With veteran Ruhhám and brave Gurgín,  
Thou wouldst have said: "They have enkindled fire,  
And with their falchions set the world ablaze!"  
Then Púládwand said to his troops: "With throne,  
Renown, and treasure lost, why throw away  
Our lives or think at all of further strife?"

And, with his very life-cord snapped in twain  
By Rustam, marched his army from the plain.

## § 26

*How Afrásiyáb fled from Rustam*

Pírán spake thus unto Afrásiyáb :—

“ The surface of the world is like a sea !

Did not I say : ‘ We cannot tarry here

Secure from Rustam of the deadly hand ? ’

By murdering the youth beloved by him

Thou hast transfix’d our hearts with arrow-points.

How wilt thou fare ? None of thine own remaineth,

V. 1044

And Púládward the div hath marched away.

The horsemen of Írán on barded chargers

Exceed in sooth a hundred thousand men ;

The lion-catching Rustam is their leader,

And air is full of arrows, earth of blood.

From sea and plain, from mountain and from waste,

Our warriors assembled ; when men failed

We tried the divs. Great were the strife and shouts,

But now, since Rustam came, no place is left

For thee ; the only prudent course is flight.

Since thou art here the treasure of the earth

Thou shouldst withdraw to further Chín. Leave here

Thy troops thus ranged for battle and betake thee,

Thou and thy kindred, seaward.”

The king saw

That fight was hopeless, took the advice, and fled.

They left his flag but he himself departed,

And went in haste toward Máchín and Chín.

The armies came together face to face,

The earth grew like a darksome cloud, anon

The peerless Rustam shouted to his host :—

“ Take not your bows and arrows or your spears,

But battle with the mace and scimitar,  
And show a prowess worthy of your standing.  
Is it the time for pards to shun the fray  
When they perceive the quarry in the lair ? ”

The soldiers left their spears upon the mount,  
And, shouting, made the dales and plains of fight  
Impassable with corpses. Half the living  
Asked quarter, and the others fled pell-mell ;  
There was no shepherd and the flock was scattered ;  
The plain was filled with handless, neckless trunks.  
Then Rustam spake and said : “ Enough are slain.  
These changes are the lot of all, at whiles  
Producing bane, at whiles the antidote.  
Put off your arms and do more good henceforth.

V. 1045

Why set your hearts upon this Wayside Inn,  
Which now is joyful and then sorrowful,  
Which now assaileth us like Áhriman,  
And then is like a bride all scent and colour ?  
Choose calm, untroubled lives, for who can say  
That cursing is a better thing than blessing ? ”

He chose gold, silver, raiment yet unworn,  
Youths, horses, swords, and casques to send the Sháh,  
Took for himself crowns, musk, and ambergris,  
And lavished on the troops the residue.  
He fain had found the monarch of Túrán,  
Path and no path they sought him everywhere.  
Folk gave no trace of him by land or sea ;  
No tidings reached them of Afrisiyáb.  
The Íránians set themselves to desolate  
His banquet-houses and his palaces,  
And Rustam fired his settlements beside ;  
That conflagration blazed up far and wide.

## § 27

*How Rustam returned to the Court of the Sháh*

Before they left Túrán they loaded up  
Crowns, thrones, and precious armour; they had captured  
So many camels and such herds of horses  
That none could murmur at the lack of beasts.  
There rose a shouting and a blare of trumpets,  
They brought the camel-bells and brazen gongs,  
And entered on their march toward Írán,  
A host thus decked with colour and perfume.

As soon as news of Rustam reached the Sháh  
A shout came from the city and the court,  
And cloudward from Írán rose tymbal-din  
Proclaiming that the lord of mace and mail  
Had come. One common joy was in the world  
Among all classes and degrees of men.  
The Sháh's heart grew like Paradise above,  
He offered praises to Almighty God,  
Bade bring the elephants, and journeyed forth.  
The world was decked according to the custom,  
Wine, harp, and minstrelsy were in request,  
The necks of all the elephants that went  
Were drenched with saffron, musk, and wine. The  
drivers

Wore coronets upon their heads, and earrings  
Depended from their ears. Men poured down saffron  
And drachms, and sifted ambergris on musk.  
When matchless Rustam saw the exalted crown,  
While all around was echoing applause,  
He lighted from his steed and did obeisance.  
Khusrau inquired about the tedious march,  
Embracing Rustam long and heartily,  
And, calling many a blessing down on him,  
Bade him remount and, as they fared together

V. 1046

Hand within hand, said thus : " Why hast thou stayed  
So long and burnt us through our love of thee ? "

" Apart from thee," thus Rustam made reply,  
" Our hearts have not enjoyed a moment's pleasure."

V. 1047

They reached at length the palace of the Sháh,  
The far-famed court; there on the golden throne  
Sat Kai Khusrau with noble Rustam, Tús,  
Gív, Fariburz, Gúdarz, Farhád, Gurgín,  
And brave Ruhhám. The Sháh spake of the war,  
The field, and fighting of the Turkman host.  
Gúdarz replied : " O sire ! the tale is long !  
Our first needs are the flagon, wine, and rest,  
And afterward thou mayest question us."

They spread the tables and the Sháh said smiling :—  
" Good sooth ! thou hast been famished by the march."<sup>1</sup>

He set wine on the board, called minstrelsy,  
And then inquired of all that had occurred,  
About Afrásiyáb and Púládwand,  
The twisted lasso and the wrestling-bout,  
About the Khán, Kámús, and Ashkabús,  
And that vast army with its elephants  
And drums. Gúdarz addressed him thus : " O Sháh !  
No mother will bring forth a cavalier  
Like Rustam. Though a dív or lion cometh  
Or dragon, none escapeth his long clutch.  
A thousand blessings be upon the king,  
Above all on this famous paladin."

The words so pleased Khusrau that thou hadst  
said :—

" He raised his head to Saturn." He rejoined :—  
" World-conquering paladin, alert and shrewd !  
The man with wisdom for his monitor  
Is circumspect in time's vicissitudes.  
Be evil's eye far from this paladin,  
And may his life be one long festival."

<sup>1</sup> " Il paraît que la route t'a altéré " (Mohl).

They spent a week with wine in hand. The crown,  
The throne, and company rejoiced in Rustam,  
While some to melody of pipe and strings  
Sang in heroic strains his combatings.

## § 28

*How Rustam went back to Sistán*

The peerless Rustam tarried with the Sháh  
One month in revelry. At length he said :—  
“ O full of virtues, wearer of the crown !  
The monarch of the world is wise and good,  
But yet I long to see the face of Zál.”

The great Sháh then unlocked his treasury-door,  
And of the precious things there stored away  
Such gifts as jewels, crowns, and finger-rings,  
Brocade and raiment from Barbar, and slaves,  
With earrings and with crowns, a hundred steeds  
And camels, saddled or for portorage,  
With golden trays of aloes and of musk,  
Two golden slippers, and a mace to match  
Inlaid with jewels that a king might wear,  
Gifts that became a man of such renown,  
The Sháh sent matchless Rustam, and went out  
Two stages with him on the journey home ;  
And Rustam when the king was wearying  
Of that long road gat down and homaged him,  
Bade him farewell, then left Írán behind,  
And hastened onward to Zábulistán.  
The world became obedient to the Sháh,  
And settled in accordance to his will.

This tale too have I ended and 'tis long—  
This battle with Kámús—and from my song  
No jot hath fallen. Had but one word been  
Left out it would have caused my soul chagrin.

I joyed o'er Púládwand who added not  
His steel chains to the chains that we have got.<sup>1</sup>  
Now hear the battle with Akwán and know  
How famous Rustam fared against that foe.

<sup>1</sup> "Púládwand," with the change of one letter, would mean "a steel chain."

## PART IV

### THE STORY OF THE FIGHT OF RUSTAM WITH THE DÍV AKWÁN

#### ARGUMENT

The poet half apologises for introducing this story into the *Sháhnáma*, but pleads that we live in a world of wonders. The tale runs thus: Complaints are brought to Kai Khusrán of the ravages made among the herds by a certain onager which the Sháh perceives to be the dív Akwán. Accordingly he sends Rustam to the rescue, who is, however, taken at a disadvantage by the dív, and only saves his life by his ready wit. He then falls in with Afrásiyáb and his meiny, and defeats them single-handed. Afterward he again encounters Akwán, slays him, and returns home in triumph.

#### NOTE

This story is a variation on the theme "the devil is an ass." Firdausí probably introduced it into the *Sháhnáma* to explain the references in Part V. Afrásiyáb uses, "the boulder of the dív Akwán," to cover the entrance of the pit in which Bizhan is imprisoned. Rustam, when he comes to deliver Bizhan, is represented as lifting the stone single-handed and flinging it far away.<sup>1</sup>

In Zoroastrian theology Urmazd was supposed to be surrounded by impersonations of his own divine qualities, who were known as the Ameshaspentas, "the immortal well-doers." They were six in number, and among them was one named Vohu Manau, i.e. Good Thought. Corresponding to these on Ahriman's side were six impersonations of his evil qualities, one of which was Akem Manau, i.e. Bad Thought. These good and evil impersonations were opposed to one another in pairs. Vohu Manau, for instance, was antagonised by Akem Manau. It has been suggested by

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 309, 345.

Professor Nöldeke that Akwán is a mistake of Firdausí or of his authorities for Akúmán, and that the div Akwán is really none other than Akem Manau in disguise.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Anishma daéva (div), the demon of wrath, appears to be the Asmodeus of the Book of Tobit.

## § 1

*The Prelude*

- V. 1049 Be adoration as thy duty, sage!  
 To God the Lord of soul and wisdom raised,  
 Yet let this question thy bright mind engage:—  
 Can any praise Him as He should be praised?  
 All knowledge that we have is feebleness;  
 For such poor weaklings who can tears repress?  
 Philosopher! in vain thou biddest me  
 In many words to make thy path mine own,  
 The best word witnesseth God's unity.  
 Albeit, said or not said, God is One.  
 What things soever pass before thine eyes  
 Accord to this conviction of thy mind.  
 Walk then the beaten track if thou art wise  
 Or else discussion will no limit find.  
 Born, soul and body, in a single breath  
 Of mighty moment is thyself to thee,  
 Yet here thou hast but brief reprieve from death,  
 And in another home thy rest will be.  
 Think first of the Creator then and base  
 Thy worship on the thought well understood  
 That He who keepeth turning heaven in place  
 Is He that is thy Guide to every good.  
 The world is full of wonders to thy view,  
 And none hath means to judge them here below:  
 Thy soul is wonderful, thy body too,  
 So let thy first task be thyself to know,  
 And next the sky which turneth over thee

<sup>1</sup> NIN, p. 10, note.

In all its daily mutability.  
 The rustic minstrel's tale of days of old  
   Thou mayest not be willing to receive,  
 For men of wisdom who shall hear it told,  
   And weigh it learnedly, will disbelieve;  
 Yet, if thou wilt the inner meaning scan,  
   Thou wilt accept it and from carping cease,  
 So hear the story of the ancient man  
   Though it may be his words will fail to please.

V. 1050

## § 2

*How Khusrâu summoned Rustam to fight the Div Akwân*

Thus saith the storying minstrel: Kai Khusrâu  
 One morn adorned his Rose-bed like the spring.  
 Such chieftains as Gúdarz, Tús, Gustaham,  
 Barzín son of Garshâsp, sprung from Jamshíd,  
 With Giv and with Ruhhám the veteran,  
 Gurgín and sage Kharrád sat with the Sháh,  
 And drained the goblet to the king of kings  
 Right merrily. One hour of day had passed  
 When there arrived a herdsman from the plain,  
 Who came before Khusrâu, first kissed the ground,  
 And then addressed that Sháh of glorious race:—  
 "An onager hath come amongst the herds,  
 And seemeth like a dív escaped from bond!  
 Thou wouldest say: 'It is a savage lion!'  
 He breaketh our steeds' necks; he is in colour  
 As 'twere the sun itself; thou wouldest say:—  
 'The sky hath washed him in a bath of gold.'  
 Drawn from his neck and reaching to his tail  
 There is a line as black as musk. If thou  
 Wouldest judge by his round haunches and his feet  
 Thou wouldest say: 'He is a noble steed.'"

Khusrâu, aware that 'twas no onager,

For onagers surpass not steeds in strength,  
 And having heard that people near the stream,  
 Where this man used to turn the herds to graze,  
 Made much complaint about Akwán the div,  
 Said to the hind: "This is no onager,  
 And I have knowledge of it. Go thy way."

V. 1051

He then addressed the chiefs: "Ye paladins,  
 With Grace and state! we need one lion-fiercé  
 Among yourselves to go on this emprise."

He scanned the warriors but found none to please  
 him,

For only Rustam son of Zál could help  
 In such a cause, and so Khusrau prepared  
 A letter couched in just and loving terms,  
 And gave it to Gurgín son of Milád,  
 To whom he said: "Bear to the son of Zál  
 My letter, go like smoke both night and day,  
 And slumber not within Zábulistán.  
 Greet Rustam much and lovingly from me,  
 Say to him: 'Live while heaven itself shall last,'  
 And add when he hath read the letter through:—  
 'My Grace is all from thee, aspiring chief!  
 Show us thy face, arise, and come. When thou  
 Hast read the letter stay not in Zábul.'"

Gurgín departed like a rushing wind,  
 Or onager in terror for its life,  
 And gave the letter when he reached the chieftain,  
 Who heard, obeyed, and went to court in state,  
 There kissed the ground before the throne and blessed  
 The imperial fortunes, saying thus: "O Sháh!  
 Thou calledst me, and here am I girt up  
 To do thy will. Be might and goodness thine."

Khusrau, on seeing Rustam, welcomed him,  
 Gave him a seat upon the royal throne,  
 And afterward spake thus: "O paladin:  
 Mayst thou live ever glad and bright of soul.

This day is blessed since I look on thee :  
 My fortunes all depend on thy shrewd mind.  
 A work is toward, O elephantine one !  
 For which I summoned thee of all the mighty,  
 So that, if thou distaste not my command,  
 Thou mayest gird thee to win crown and treasure.  
 A hind hath said : ' An onager hath come  
 Among the herds.' "

V. 1052

The Sháh told o'er the tale,  
 And added : " Now, O matchless one, make ready !  
 And undertake this further enterprise.  
 Go, and in dealing with it have a care,  
 For it may be malicious Áhriman."

" Through thy good fortune," Rustam made reply,  
 " Now whether it be lion, dív, or dragon,  
 The servant of thy throne is not afraid :  
 It shall not 'scape my scimitar's sharp blade."

## § 3

*How Rustam went in Quest of the Dív*

He went forth like a lion to the chase,  
 A lasso on his arm and under him  
 A Dragon, went to where that hind was tending  
 His cattle and that dív was roaming loose.<sup>1</sup>  
 Three days he searched the champaign mid the steeds,  
 And on the fourth perceived a Thing careering,  
 And rushing by him like the north wind's blast.  
 It was a glossy beast of golden hue,  
 But with fell mischief 'neath its hide. Then Rustam  
 Spurred fleet-foot Rakhsh but thought as he drew  
 near :—

" I need not cast but noose it with my lasso ;  
 There is no call to spoil it with the sword ;  
 I will convey it living to the Sháh."

<sup>1</sup> Reading with P.

V. 1053

So Rustam flung his royal lasso forth,  
 Intent to take the creature by the head.  
 The lusty onager perceived the noose,  
 And vanished instantly. Then Rustam knew:—  
 "This is no onager; I must proceed  
 By craft not force. It is Akwán himself,  
 And I must smite him with a whiff of steel.  
 The sages told me that this is his haunt,  
 But his appearance as an onager  
 Is strange! The scimitar must now avail  
 To make blood overflow that yellow gold."

Just then the onager appeared again;  
 Again the chieftain urged his swift career,  
 Strung up his bow and from his wind-like steed  
 Let fly an arrow like Ázargashasp,  
 But even as he drew his royal bow  
 The onager was gone the second time.  
 Then Rustam rode about the open plain  
 A day and night in want of sustenance,  
 And nodding in the saddle, till he found  
 A fountain like rose-water. Lighting there  
 He watered Rakhsh and sank to sleep fordone,  
 But first ungirthed his steed, took off the saddle  
 To use its poplar pummel as his pillow,  
 And spread beside the spring his saddle-cloth  
 For sleep while Rakhsh to pasturage sped forth.

## § 4

*How the Div Akwán flung Rustam into the Sea*

When from afar Akwán saw Rustam sleeping  
 He came as swift as wind, delved round about  
 The place where Rustam lay, and raised it skyward.  
 When Rustam woke from sleep he woke to sorrow,  
 And his wise head was filled with consternation.

He thought: "So this foul *dív* hath laid for me  
 A snare like this! Woe for my strength and courage,  
 My neck, and blows with mace and scimitar!  
 This matter will make desolate the world,  
 Achieving all *Afrásiyáb's* desire,  
 While *Tús*, *Gúdarz*, *Khusrau*, the throne and crown,  
 The elephants and drums, will be no more.  
 Through me the world will suffer, since *Akwán*  
 Hath spoiled my marketing. Who will take vengeance  
 On this curst *dív*? No one will match him now."

V. 1054

Then said *Akwán* to *Rustam* in his plight:—  
 "Now, elephantine chieftain! take thy choice  
 To fall upon the mountains or the waves;  
 So whither shall I fling thee far from men?"

The elephantine hero communed thus:—  
 "In every case naught bettereth artifice.  
 He will do contrary to what I say;  
 He will not recognise an oath or keep  
 A pact. If I say, 'Throw me in the sea,'  
 Then will this evil-natured *Áhriman*  
 Fling me upon the mountains, dash me there  
 To pieces, and destroy me. I must use  
 Some scheme to make him fling me into water,"  
 Then said: "A sage of *Chín* hath spoken well:—  
 'Whoe'er is drowned his soul will never see  
*Surúsh* in *Paradise*, his lot will be  
 To tarry in his place in misery,  
 And not to find a welcome to the sky.'

V. 1055

Let me not therefore fall upon the ocean  
 \*To make the fishes' maws my winding-sheet,  
 But drop me on the mountains that the lions  
 And tigers may behold a brave man's hands.'

*Akwán* at this roared like the sea, and answered:—  
 "Now will I fling thee to the place wherein  
 Thou wilt be lost for ever to both worlds."  
 And, acting contrary to *Rustam's* words.

Dropped him upon the sea. As Rustam fell  
He drew his sword, and when the crocodiles  
Approached they turned aside from fighting him.  
He struck out with his feet and his left hand  
While with his right he fought his way along,  
Not resting for a moment from his toils,  
But acting as a warrior in all.  
If valour could avert the fatal day  
Time had not taken Rustam's stance away,  
But know that circling time is ever thus—  
At whiles all sweet, at whiles all venomous.

He struggled bravely, reached the shore, beheld  
The desert, and gave praises to the Maker,  
Who had delivered thus His slave from ill.  
He rested, took his armour off, and laid  
His tiger-skin cuirass beside the stream.  
Whenas his lasso and his armour dried  
That savage Lion donned his coat of mail,  
And went back to the stream where he had slept  
When that malignant div had raged at him;  
But glossy Rakhsh was nowhere in the mead,  
And Rustam, wroth and raging at his luck,  
Went plodding doggedly with reins and saddle  
In Rakhsh's track till in his quest he came  
Upon a meadow-land of streams and shaws  
Well stocked with francolins and cooing doves.  
The herdsman of Afrásiyáb who kept  
The steeds lay fast asleep within a coppice,  
While Rakhsh was prancing madly like a div  
Among the herd and neighing. Rustam cast  
His royal lasso, caught Rakhsh by the head,  
Then rubbed the dust away and saddled him,  
With thanks to God, the Giver of all good,  
Put on the bridle, mounted, took in hand  
His trenchant scimitar, and drove the herd  
Therewith, still calling on the name of God.

The herdsman, at the tumult, raised his head,  
 Still half asleep, and called the horsemen with him  
 To mount upon their lofty-crested steeds.  
 They took each man his lasso and his bow  
 To learn what foe dared come upon the pasture,  
 And to approach so many cavaliers.  
 These went together hotly in pursuit  
 To strip the warlike Lion of his hide,  
 But Rustam, when he saw them rushing on,  
 Drew quickly from his waist his vengeful sword,  
 Roared like a lion, and proclaimed: "My name  
 Is Rustam son of Zál the son of Sám."

He slew the more part with his scimitar,  
 Which when the herdsman saw he showed his back,  
 And fled away with Rustam following,  
 His bow upon his arm slung by its string.

## § 5

*How Afrásiyáb came to inspect his Steeds, and how  
 Rustam slew the Die Akván.*

It happened strangely that Afrásiyáb  
 Had sped forth like a blast to view his steeds,  
 And brought with him wine, harps, and warriors  
 To merrymake upon the watered plain  
 Where every year the herdsman loosed the herds.  
 The monarch on arriving saw them not.  
 Then suddenly rose clamour, horse on horse  
 Passed, and Afrásiyáb saw far away  
 The dust of Rakhsh, and other noble chargers.  
 The ancient herdsman rushed up frantically  
 In evil plight and wounded by an arrow,  
 Then in amazement told Afrásiyáb:—  
 "Though single-handed, Rustam hath borne off  
 Our horse-herds, killed no few of us, and gone!"

V. 1057

The Turkmans clamoured: "He is all alone,  
And we must arm, for this is past a jest.  
Have we become so wretched, weak, and frail  
That one can shed our blood? The very herds  
Will shame thereat! We cannot let it pass."

The monarch with four elephants and troops  
Went in pursuit of Rustam who, when they  
Had overtaken him, took from his arm  
His bow and charged against them furiously.  
He rained upon them, as the clouds rain hail,  
Shafts from his bow and strokes from his steel sword.  
He dropped his arrows and his scimitar,  
When sixty gallant chiefs had been o'erthrown,  
And taking up his mace slew forty more.  
Afrásiyáb in dudgeon showed his back  
While Rustam took the four white elephants.  
The warriors of Túrán were in despair,  
For Rustam came behind them with his mace,  
And, like a cloud in spring, for two leagues onward  
Rained blows like hail and beat in helmets and casques.  
He turned back, driving off the elephants  
And herds, and took the baggage-train withal,  
Yet when he went back to the spring at leisure  
His valiant heart was ready still for fight!

The div Akwán again encountered him,  
And said: "Art thou not surfeited with strife?  
Thou hast escaped the ocean and the claws  
Of crocodiles, and come back to the waste  
To battle. Now shalt thou behold thy fate,  
For never shalt thou seek to fight henceforth."

The peerless Rustam, hearing what the div  
Said, roared out like a lion of the fray,  
Released his twisted lasso from its straps,  
Flung it, and caught the div about the waist;  
Then Rustam, turning in his saddle, raised  
His mace as 'twere the hammer of a smith,

And smote the dív like some mad elephant  
 Upon his head and smashed it, brains and neck ;  
 The hero lighted, drew his blue steel sword  
 And cut the dív's head off, then offered up  
 Thanksgivings to Almighty God through Whom  
 He had achieved the victory that day.

Know thou that every one that is the thrall  
 Of ill, and offereth not to God his praise,  
 And whosoever doth transgress the ways

Of manhood, is a dív, not man at all.  
 The wisdom that rejecteth what I tell  
 May miss the goodly inner sense as well :  
 If then a paladin be full of might—  
 A man of lusty limbs and lofty height—  
 Let him, and not Akwán, thy hero be,  
 And let thy tongue tell tales of chivalry.  
 What sayest thou, O man exceeding old,  
 Experienced much in this world's heat and cold ?  
 Who knoweth what vicissitudes will here  
 Betide us often in time's long career,  
 Time which by virtue of its length alone  
 Will bear away all that we call our own ?  
 Who knoweth what yon turning vault's decree  
 Assigneth him of war or revelry ?

V. 1059

## § 6

*How Rustam went back to the Land of Irán*

When Rustam had cut off the vile dív's head  
 He mounted on his elephantine steed,  
 Collected all the herds in front of him,  
 With all the baggage that the Turkmans left,  
 And went off with the elephants and goods,  
 Illustrating the world. When to the Sháh  
 Came tidings : " Rustam hath returned in triumph !  
 He girt himself to noose that onager,

But he hath taken dív and elephant,  
The elephant by land, the crocodile  
By sea: the lions, dívs, and warriors  
That counter him escape not from his sword!"  
Khusrau prepared to go and welcome Rustam;  
The warriors put their casques upon their heads,  
And took the standard of the king of kings  
With clarions, bells, and mighty elephants.  
When Rustam saw the exalted monarch's flag  
Advancing on the way to welcome him  
He lighted from his steed and kissed the ground  
Midst shouting troops and din of trump and drum.  
The chieftains of the army went afoot  
To him; the king of kings urged on his steed.  
That chief of chiefs, the crown-bestowing prince,  
Bade Rustam mount, and thus they reached the palace  
With open hearts and mutual good-will.  
Then Rustam portioned to the Iránians  
The horse-herds, keeping Rakhsh as his own mount,  
And sent the elephants to join the Sháh's,  
Since Lions do not fare with elephants.  
For one week there was feasting in the hall,  
Wine, harp, and minstrelsy were in request,  
While Rustam o'er the wine discoursed at large,  
And told the Sháh the story of Akwán:—  
"I never saw so fine an onager,  
Such neck and limbs, and such magnificence!  
But when my scimitar had cleft his hide  
No friend or foe had pitied him. His head  
Was like an elephant's, his hair was long,  
His mouth was full of tusks like some wild boar's,  
His eyes were white, his lips were black, his form  
Was ill to see. No camel is so large  
And strong. The waste became a sea with blood,  
Which spurted, when I had beheaded him,  
Up to the welkin and came down like rain!"

Then Kai Khusráu amazed put by his cup,  
And gave God thanks for such a paladin,  
Since none had seen such wonders—that a man  
Such as was Rustam should exist at all  
In all his manliness and mien and stature.  
He said: "Unless the Lord had given me  
A share both in His justice and His love  
I never should have had a liege like this  
With whom to hunt down dívs and elephants."

V. 1061

Thus spent they two weeks joyfully; their talk  
Was all of wine and banquet. On the third  
The matchless Rustam purposed to go home  
Victorious and glad. "I yearn for Zál,  
The son of Sám," he said, "and such desire  
May not be blinked, but I will go apace,  
And come back to the court. We must prepare  
Fresh vengeance, for revenge for Siyáwush  
Is not thus easily to be forgone  
By taking steeds and herds."

The world's great king  
Unlocked the portal of his treasury,  
Brought forth the precious jewels hoarded there,  
And filled a cup with treasure. Of king's raiment  
Five changes made throughout of cloth of gold,  
With golden-girdled slave-boys brought from Rúm,  
And likewise handmaids decked with golden torques,  
With tapestries and thrones of ivory,  
Embroideries, dínárs, and turquoise crowns,  
All these the Sháh sent Rustam, saying: "Take  
This gift with thee, but stay with us to-day,  
And afterward make ready to depart."

They spent the day together quaffing wine,  
But Rustam was resolved to go at dawn.  
The Sháh went two days with him and embraced him  
At parting. Rustam cottoned to the road,  
Khusrau returned. Well ordered 'neath his signet

The world became as he would have it be.  
The ancient sky revolveth ever so,  
At whiles like arrow and at whiles like bow.

The matter of Akwán with what befell  
'Twixt him and Rustam endeth. Now I tell  
The conflicts of Bizhan, and thou shalt hear  
Of strivings that will ask of thee a tear.

## PART V

### THE STORY OF BIZHAN AND MANÍZHA

#### ARGUMENT

The poet describes how the tale was first told to him to while away the depression caused by a sleepless night, and then narrates as follows: Kai Khusráu at a feast receives a petition for succour from the people of Irmán, whose country is being ravaged by wild boars, and sends Bizhan and Gurgin to clear the country of them. Bizhan, through the machinations of Gurgin, who envies him, falls in love with Afrásiyáb's daughter Manízha, who carries off Bizhan to Túrín and hides him in her palace. He is discovered and imprisoned in a pit with Manízha as his attendant. In the meantime Gurgin has returned to Irán, where his lame story rouses suspicion. Kai Khusráu, by means of the divining-cup, ascertains the situation of Bizhan and despatches Rustam to deliver him. This Rustam achieves, Gurgin is pardoned by Bizhan, Afrásiyáb is defeated, and all ends happily.

#### NOTE

For the historical basis of this story, see p. 11.

The tale of Bizhan and Manízha is the second of the great love-stories of the *Sháhnáma*, that of Zál and Rúdába in Vol. I. being the first,<sup>1</sup> and that of Gushtásp in Róm, which will be given in Vol. IV., being the third. Mohl probably is right in considering the present story to be one of Firdausi's early works. "Le caractère de fraîcheur qui se remarque dans ce récit s'accorde bien avec la supposition que cet épisode est une œuvre de la jeunesse de Firdousi; et la versification porte quelques traces de manque d'expérience, telles que l'emploi fréquent de l'*épif* final ajouté à cause de la rime ou du mètre. Cet expédient est reçu dans la poésie persane; mais Firdousi n'en fait nulle part autant d'usage qu'au commencement de l'histoire de Bijan et de Menijeh."

<sup>1</sup> p. 256, seq.

<sup>1</sup> P. Vol. III., Préface.

The point as to the terminal *alif* perhaps may be exemplified sufficiently for the English reader by the following stanza:—

“Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,  
And merrily hent the stile-a:  
A merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad tires in a mile-a.”<sup>1</sup>

As in the English so in the Persian an “a” is added arbitrarily to help out the metre, but the analogy is not exact.

In addition to Mohl’s reasons given above we may adduce the bold Zoroastrian allusions—the outcome perhaps of a youthful enthusiasm.<sup>2</sup> The loss of Bizhan too is regarded as the first serious trouble of the Gúdarzian family,<sup>3</sup> though it would not be prudent to lay much stress upon that in the absence of other indications.

§ 1. In Mohl’s opinion the friend referred to both here and in the Prelude to the Sháh-náma (§ 10) was Muhammad Lashkari.<sup>4</sup> Firdausi, however, has left the sex indeterminate.

Hárút was an angel who, with his mate Mârút, was suspended by the feet in a well at Babylon for practising magic arts.

§ 2. Such an appeal would be characteristic of the Armenians (Irmánians) who, broken by adversity, ceased long ago to be a self-reliant people.

§§ 10 and 23. For the *div Akwán* see Part IV.

§ 12. According to Zoroastrian belief divine beings, men, the lower animals, plants, waters, sun and moon, &c., all had their immortal principle, known as their *fravashí*. These *fravashís* were worshipped especially at the beginning of the Zoroastrian year, and the month Farwardín obtained its name from the practice. At this season the spirits of deceased ancestors were supposed to revisit the houses of their descendants, and such *fravashís*, like the manes of the Romans, were objects of peculiar veneration.

§ 17. The divine beings whose blessings are invoked by Rustam on Kai Khusráu are members of a class formerly known as *Yazatas* (gods) and now as *Izads*. Some of them, among other functions, presided over the Zoroastrian Calendar, and gave their names to the days of the month and to the months of the year.<sup>5</sup> They may be regarded as celestial satraps among whom the divine qualities and the good creation of Urnuzd have been parcelled out. Bahman presides over Good Thought, Ardibihisht over Perfect Rectitude, Shahrír over Perfect Rule,

<sup>1</sup> *The Winter’s Tale*, iv. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* pp. 320, 323, 330.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 317, 327.

<sup>4</sup> P. Vol. iii., Préface.

<sup>5</sup> See Vol. i. p. 88.

Sapandármad over Bountiful Devotion, Murdád over Immortality, and Khurdád over Health. The above are all Ameshapentas.<sup>1</sup> Bahráim presides over Victory, Tir over Mercury, Dai over Business, Ázar over Fire, Ábán over Waters, while Farwardín represents the Fravashís.<sup>2</sup>

## § 1

*The Prelude*

The night was like jet dipped in pitch, there lent  
 No planet lustre to the firmament,  
 The moon, appearing in her new array  
 In readiness to take her throneward way,  
 Much brightness lost by sojourning below ;  
 Her waist was shrunk, her heart was full of woo,  
 Her crown was well-nigh lapis-lazuli ;  
 Through rust and dust she journeyed through the sky.  
 Night's retinue had spread out everywhere  
 A carpet black as raven's plumes, the air  
 Was like rust-eaten steel ; thou wouldst have cried :—  
 " Its face is smirched with pitch ! " On every side,  
 Like some black serpent with its jaws stretched wide,  
 Was very Áhriman, each sigh of whom  
 Was like a negro making charcoal fume.  
 The garden and the stream's lip seemed to be  
 Like billows surging on a pitchy sea  
 O'er which the circling heaven paused wonderingly.  
 The sun had lost its power ; thou wouldst have said :—  
 " Earth sleepeth with a pitch-like robe o'erspread."  
 The world's heart trembled at itself ; no sounds  
 Were heard but watchmen ringing on their rounds ;  
 The birds refrained from song, the beasts were still,  
 The world's lips closed alike for good or ill,  
 And height and depth were lost. Amid the woes  
 Of that long vigil strait at heart I rose.  
 I had one in the house, a loving wight,

V. 1063

V. 1064

<sup>1</sup> See p. 271.<sup>2</sup> See above.

To whom I called and bade to bring a light,  
 Descending to the garden presently  
 My darling Idol came and said to me :—  
 "What need for light? Will sleep not visit thee?"

I said: "Mine Idol! I am not at one  
 With slumber. Bring a candle like the sun,  
 Set it in front of me, then spread the board,  
 Take up the harp, and let the wine be poured."

My darling Idol fetched me lamps a-shine,  
 Fetched quinces, oranges, pomegranates, wine,  
 And one bright goblet fit for king of kings,  
 Then plied at whiles the wine, at whiles the strings,  
 "Hárút performed enchantment," thou hadst said,  
 My heart grew victor over drearihead,  
 And it seemed day with me in dark night's stead.  
 Hear what my loving comrade said to me  
 What time the goblet had joined company.  
 Thus said to me that sun-faced Moon of mine :—  
 "May heaven have joyance of that life of thine.  
 Quaff thou thy wine while from this volume's store  
 I will read out to thee a tale of yore.

Or ever part thereof shall reach thine ear  
 Thou wilt admire the process of the Sphere.  
 The theme is love, spell, war, and stratagem,  
 All worthy that a sage should list to them."

"O Moon-face!" said I to that Cypress-stem,  
 "Recite, recite," who answered: "That will I,  
 And thou shalt weave it into poetry."

I said: "Begin, my fair-faced Moon! to read,  
 And make me love thee more. I may be freed  
 From my distemperature, and sleep betide  
 In musings, darling mate! by thee supplied.  
 Then will I turn the story, every whit,  
 To verse exactly as thou tellest it,  
 And, telling, offer praise to God above,  
 O my discreet companion and my love!"

That darling Idol read the tale to me  
 Out of the book of ancient legendry,  
 So now give ear the while that I rehearse,  
 And exercise thy judgment on my verse.

## § 2

*How the Irminians appealed to Khusrau*

When Kai Khusrau went forth to take revenge,  
 And sought to change the order of the world,  
 The throne and state departed from Túrán,  
 But his throne topped the sun because he leagued  
 Heaven and Írán together, and lavished love  
 Upon the noble race, the age renewed  
 Its youth and bathed his face in loyalty;  
 And though the prudent maketh not his couch  
 A torrent-bed though dry, yet for a while  
 The more part of the world acknowledged him  
 That sought to be avenged for Siyáwush.

One day he sat carousing in his joy,  
 And drinking to the warriors of the host.  
 His throne was ornate with brocade, a crown  
 Of gems was on his head, and in his hand  
 A jewelled cup of wine. Thus, all enraptured,  
 He listened to the harp. The nobles present  
 Were Fariburz the son of Kai Káuś,  
 And Gustaham, Gúdarz son of Kishwád,  
 Gurgín son of Milád, Farhád, and Gív,  
 Shápúr the brave, Tús, shatterer of hosts—  
 Head of the scions of Naudar—Kharrád,  
 And bold Bízhan. These loyal paladins  
 Had royal wine in hand. Inside the goblets  
 The wine was like carnelian of Yaman.  
 And in the midst were handfuls of dog-roses.  
 Before Khusrau stood slaves with fairy-faces,

V. 1066

Whose musk-black ringlets fell on skins of jasmine.  
The banquet-hall was decked, and in the presence  
Girt for attendance stood the chamberlain.

Approaching him discreetly from the curtain  
An usher said: "Irmánians wait without—  
Chiefs of the march between this and Túrán:  
They fain would have an audience of the Sháh,  
For they have travelled far to seek redress."

The prudent chamberlain approached the throne,  
Announced his tidings, sought the royal pleasure,  
And introduced the envoys in due form.  
They came before the presence of the Sháh  
With tears and cries for aid; their arms were folded,  
Their faces swept the ground; as they drew nigh  
They said: "O Sháh triumphant! live for ever,  
For thou art worthy of unending life.

We come for succour from a distant land,  
Khán-i-Irmán, between this and Túrán,  
And bring this message: 'Ever live, O Sháh!  
In every clime the succourer from the evil,  
O'er all seven climes the king, and in each state  
The help against the bad. Túrán and we  
Confine, which is a source of bale to us,  
While toward Írán there was a forest-tract—  
Our present cause of trouble. What a wealth

V. 1067

Of cultivated lands was ours therein,  
And fruit trees, our chief means of sustenance!  
Now do us right, O monarch of Írán!  
Because wild boars in numbers numberless,  
With tusks like elephants', and big as hills,  
Have seized on all those woods and meads, and put  
The country of Irmán in consternation.  
What mighty ruin have they brought on us  
Both in our cattle and our growing crops!  
The boars delight in rending with their tusks  
The cultivated trees whereof we speak.

Hard stones will not withstand such tusks, and fortune  
May be hath utterly abandoned us!"

Now when the Sháh had heard the suppliants'  
words

He was much grieved and, pitying them, addressed  
The exalted warriors: "Who among my chiefs  
And mighty men is eager for renown?  
Let such depart to yon boar-wasted forest,  
And, all intent on fame and combating,  
Behead them with his sword. I will not grudge him  
My gems and other treasures."

At his bidding

The treasurer laid upon the dais a salver  
Of gold whereon they showered mingled gems;  
They brought ten steeds, whose brand-mark was "Káús,"  
With golden bridles, trapped them with brocade  
Of Rúm, and called the nobles from the throng.  
"O men of name and worship!" said earth's king,  
"What man will make my toil his own and then  
My treasure his?"

None answered him a word

Except the son of Gív of glorious race—  
Bízhan—who stood forth midst the warriors,  
And called God's blessing down upon the Sháh:—  
"Ne'er may thy palace see another master,  
And be thy bidding done throughout the world.  
I will adventure on this enterprise  
At thy command: I only live for thee."

Gív, who was standing by, marked with displeasure  
His son's words, called down blessings on the Sháh,  
Then took Bízhan to task: "What boyishness  
Is this, and this conceit of thine own might?  
A youth may have both wit and native worth,  
But he must train to win accomplishment;  
He must exhaust all kinds of good and ill,  
Must taste of every salt and bitter. Go not

By paths that thou hast never trodden or brag  
Before the Sháh so recklessly."

Bízhan,

Shrewd, though impulsive, and of sleepless fortune,  
Replied in anger: "My victorious sire!  
Impute not weakness to me in thy thoughts,  
But bear with what I tell thee: I am young  
In enterprise but I am old in counsel,  
And I, Bízhan, who am the son of Giv,  
The army-shatterer, will behead the boars."

The Sháh rejoiced thereat, invoked God's blessing,  
Bade him depart, and said: "Thou man of worship!  
Thou art a buckler ever 'gainst all ill.  
The lord that hath such lieges as thou art  
Would be a fool to fear a foe."

He then

Said to Gurgín son of Mílád: "Bízhan  
Is ignorant of the road toward Irmán,  
So bear him company with mule and steed  
To show the way and be his help in need."

### § 3

#### *How Bízhan went to fight the wild Boars*

V. 1069

Bízhan made ready for his setting forth,  
Girt him, and set a casque upon his head.  
He took with him Gurgín son of Mílád  
To help in battle and in time of need,  
And left the court with cheetahs and with hawks  
To hunt withal upon his longsome journey.  
Like foaming lion he fared and took the heads  
From onager and antelope; the plain  
Was thick with wild sheep torn; their hearts and  
breasts  
Felt the warm impress of the cheetah's claws.

His lasso ringed the necks of onagers,  
 He seemed like 'Tahmúras who bound the Div,  
 While overhead the pheasants clutched by falcons  
 Dyed jasmine-leaves with blood. Thus sped the twain,  
 And thought the road a garden, till they reached  
 The forest that had caused the Sháh's concern.  
 Now when Bízhan cast eyes thereon the blood  
 Boiled in him with excitement, while the boars  
 Roamed freely, knowing not: "Bízhan hath mounted."  
 On drawing near the forest to attack  
 He spake thus to Gurgin son of Mílád :—  
 "Go thou inside or stand aside, and when  
 I go to shoot the boars seek yonder pool.  
 Then, when a tumult riseth from the wood;  
 Take up thy mace, be ware, and with one blow  
 Behead each boar escaping."

V. 1070

But Gurgin,  
 The warrior, answered: "Such was not the compact  
 With our young Sháh. Thou hadst the jewels, silver,  
 And gold, and didst adventure for this field;  
 Ask but mine aidance then to show the way."

Bízhan heard with amaze, his outlook darkened,  
 But lion-like he went inside the forest,  
 Undaunted strung his bow, roared mightily  
 As 'twere a cloud in spring, and brought the leaves  
 Down like a shower of rain, then sword in hand  
 Like some mad elephant he chased the boars  
 While they rushed at him, tuskings up the earth.  
 Then came one boar, a very Áhrimán,  
 Whose tusches cut through trees like files through  
 stone,

And rent his hauberk while the reek of fight  
 Rose o'er the mead. Bízhan's sword smote the boar  
 And clave its elephantine form. The beasts  
 So fierce before grew fox-like; all were stained  
 With blood from sword-cuts; they had had enough

Of combating. Bízhan cut off their heads,  
 And tied them to his charger's saddle-straps,  
 That he might lay the tusks before the Sháh :  
 And furthermore, in order to display  
 His courage to the Íránian chiefs, he flung  
 Some headless trunks, like mountains, on a wain,  
 And buffalos were wearied with the strain.

## § 4

*How Gurgín beguiled Bízhan*

- V. 1071 Malevolent Gurgín, the insensate one,  
 Apart drew near the forest sullenly,  
 And all the wood gloomed in his eyes albeit  
 He praised Bízhan and made a show of joy.  
 That matter grieved his heart, he feared disgrace,  
 And Áhriman seduced him. He was fain  
 To do Bízhan a mischief; 'twas his wish,  
 And so ordained. He thought not of the Maker,  
 But he that diggeth pitfalls in the way  
 Hath reason to walk warily himself.  
 Gurgín for his own profit and renown  
 Spread out his nets upon the young man's path,  
 And said: "O paladin, thou Heart of combat,  
 And Soul of wisdom! many an enterprise  
 Like this thou wilt achieve through thy high fortune  
 And God's support. Now I must tell thee somewhat.  
 For I have been here often in past time  
 With Rustam and with Giv and Gustaham,  
 With Gazhdaham and Tús son of Naudar.  
 How many a feat of prowess done by us  
 Hath heaven witnessed on this spacious plain—  
 V. 1072 Feats that have raised our reputations high,  
 And rendered us the dearer to Khusrau'  
 There is a pleasure-ground not far away,

And only two days' journey from Túrân,  
Where thou wilt see a plain all red and yellow—  
One to rejoice a hero's heart, all woods  
And pleasancess and rivulets, a spot  
Fit for a paladin, with painted silk  
For soil, and airs musk-laden: thou wouldst say:—  
'Perchance it is rose-water in the streams.'  
The jasmine-branches bend beneath their burden;  
The roses, which the pheasants love to haunt,  
Are there the idols, and their worshippers  
The bulbuls singing in the cypress-boughs.  
Now from this present for a little while  
Yon river's marge will be like Paradise,  
And on the plain and uplands thou wilt see  
In merry parties fay-faced damsels sitting.  
Manízha, daughter of Afrásiyáb,  
Will make that garden radiant as the sun,  
And with a hundred handmaids—perfect pictures,  
All daughters of the Turkmans, modest maids,  
As tall as cypress-trees, with musky hair,  
And cheeks like roses, dreamy eyes, and wine  
That savoureth rose-water on their lips—  
Will set up her pavilion on yon meadows.  
Thou wilt behold the plain bedecked throughout  
With riches like an idol-house in Chin.  
Now if we go toward that pleasure-ground,  
And hurry o'er the journey in one day,  
We may bear off some of those fay-faced damsels,  
And win the approbation of Khusrau."

In this wise spake Gurgin. Bízhan was young,  
And all the paladin was stirred in him.  
He was a youth and followed youthful fashion,  
Some whiles pursuing fame and some whiles passion.

## § 5

*How Bízhan went to see Manísha, Daughter of Afrásiyáb*

V. 1073 They set off on the tedious journey, one  
 Led by desire, the other by revenge.  
 Bízhan, the refuge of the host, alighted  
 Between two forests after one day's march.  
 He and Gurgín enjoyed two days with hawk  
 And cheetah in those meadows of Irmán.  
 On hearing that that marriageable maid  
 Had come, and decked the whole waste like the eye  
 Of chanticleer, Gurgín informed Bízhan,  
 And told him of the minstrelsy and feasting,  
 Whereat "Now will I," thus Bízhan responded,  
 "Go forward and examine from a distance  
 The scene and manner of the Turkmans' revels;  
 Then with my polished spear-head lifted skyward  
 Will I turn rein. We shall advise the better,  
 As feeling more assured, when we have seen."

He bade the treasurer: "Bring the crown that used,  
 Worn by my sire, to light the banquet-hall,  
 Because our way is banquet-ward. Bring likewise  
 The earrings and the torque that Kai Khusrau  
 Bestowed on me, and Giv's bejewelled armlet."

He donned a glittering tunic made in Rûm,  
 And stuck an eagle's feather in his crown.  
 They put the saddle on his steed Shabrang  
 While he bade bring the girdle and the signet  
 V. 1074 That marked the paladin, and having mounted  
 Went to the spot in haste.

He reached the forest,  
 His heart preoccupied with its desires,  
 He drew anigh that Fair's pavilion,  
 Desire contending in his heart the while,  
 And went beneath a lofty cypress-tree

For shelter from the sun. The plain, with all  
 Its sounds of harp and song gave, thou hadst said,  
 His soul a welcome. When the fair one saw  
 The visage of the chieftain from her tent—  
 The cheeks as 'twere Canopus of Yaman,  
 Or jasmine blossoming mid violets—  
 While on his head he wore the crown that marked  
 A chief of paladins, and all his breast  
 Blazed with brocade of Rûm, the maiden yearned  
 For love of him, who came in quest of love,  
 And sent her nurse as envoy, saying thus:—  
 "Go 'neath the boughs of yonder lofty cypress,  
 And find out who he is—yon moonlike one.  
 Can it be Siyâwush returned to life,  
 Or else a fairy? Question him and say:—  
 'How hast thou come and who hath brought thee  
                   hither?

Art thou of fairy-birth or Siyâwush  
 That thou dost fill our hearts with love for thee,  
 For thou hast lit a raging fire of love,  
 Unless the Resurrection be upon us,  
 Because for years have I been holding revel  
 Upon these meads each spring, and we have seen  
 None in this pleasance; but I now see thee,  
 O noble Cypress! and it is enough.'  
 Say to him: 'Whether thou art man or fairy  
 Come to our festival. I have not looked  
 On aught resembling thee, O moon-faced one!  
 Inform us of thy name and whence thou comest.'

V. 1075

The nurse, when she had come and done obeisance,  
 Gave him Manîzha's message, and his cheeks  
 Bloomed like the rose. He saw his wish achieved,  
 And answered thus: "I am not Siyâwush,  
 Or fairy-born, sweet-spoken messenger!  
 But from Írán—the country of the free.  
 Bizhan am I, the son of Gîv, and came

All keenly thence to battle with wild boars.  
 I took their heads and threw them by the way  
 To bear their tusches to the Sháh; but hearing  
 About this pleasance did not hurry back  
 To Gív, son of Gúdarz, if so good fortune  
 Might show me though but in a dream the face  
 Of her—the daughter of Afrásiyáb;  
 And now I see that all the plain is decked  
 With treasures like an idol-house in Chin.  
 If thou wilt show me kindness I will give thee  
 A crown of gold with earrings and a girdle,  
 And thou shalt lead me to yon lady fair,  
 And bring her heart to love me."

She returned,  
 And bore the secret to Manízha's ear:—  
 "His countenance and mien are such and such,  
 In such and such wise hath the Maker made him."

Manízha sent an answer back forthwith:—  
 "What seemed a fancy is within thy grasp,  
 For now come to me with thy noble gait,  
 And shed a light on this dark soul of mine.  
 Mine eyes will brighten at the sight of thee,  
 Vale, plain, and tents will turn to rosaries."

With neither heart nor ear for aught beside  
 Her words he followed and she acted guide.<sup>1</sup>

### § 6

#### *How Bizhan went to the Tent of Manízha*

No room was left for further parleying.  
 Forth from beneath the shadow of the cypress  
 Bizhan proceeded hastily afoot  
 Toward Manízha's tent and entered it,

<sup>1</sup> "La réponse de Menijeh fit du cœur et de l'oreille de Bijan au palais" (Mohl).

In favour like a stately cypress-tree,  
 Girt with a golden girdle round his loins.  
 Maníẓha came and clasped him to her breast,  
 Unloosed the royal girdle from his waist,  
 Asked of his journey, equipage, and business,  
 And said: "Who came with thee to fight the boars?  
 Why trouble with a mace, O comely one,  
 Who hast a shape like this, such mien and bearing?"

They bathed his feet in musk and pure rose-water,  
 Then hastened to set meat, they spread the board  
 With various viands in profuse abundance,  
 And held high revelry with wine and harp,  
 Excluding every stranger from the tent.  
 The handmaids standing in attendance there  
 Played on the lyre and lute. The ground resembled  
 The colours of a peacock with brocade  
 All dappled with dínárs like leopards' backs,  
 While all the tent-enclosure was adorned  
 With musk and jewels, ambergris and gold.  
 Old wine in crystal cups gave to Bizhan  
 New strength, but, when three days and nights had  
     passed  
 In pleasure, sleep and drink prevailed at last.

## § 7

*How Maníẓha carried off Bizhan to her Palace*

Maníẓha, when her time for going home  
 Arrived, still longed to gaze upon Bizhan,  
 And, since his face was gloomy, called her handmaids,  
 And bade them mingle with a grateful draught  
 A drug that maketh senseless. This they gave him,  
 And he, bemused already, swallowed it;  
 His head sank down and he was lost to sense.  
 She made a litter to transport the sleeper,

V. 1977

A couch for him on one side, on the other  
 An easy seat for her. She sprinkled camphor  
 Upon his couch, and with rose-water drenched  
 The sandal-wood.

On coming near the city  
 She veiled the sleeper in a woman's wrapper,  
 And, entering the palace privily  
 By night, preserved her secret. She prepared  
 A chamber and, impatient for Bízhan  
 To wake, poured in his ear a rousing potion  
 To bring his senses back. He woke and found  
 That jasmine-bosomed beauty in his arms,  
 His head and hers both resting on a pillow,  
 And in the palace of Afrásiyáb!  
 Distracted with himself he turned for refuge  
 To God from Áhriman and thus exclaimed:—  
 "As for myself there will be no escaping,  
 O God Almighty! hence. But oh! that Thou  
 Wouldst execute my vengeance on Gurgín,  
 And hear the pains and malisons that I  
 Invoke on him! He led me into this,  
 Reciting over me a thousand spells."

Manfzha said to him: "Be of good cheer,  
 And treat all save the present as mere wind.  
 V. 1078 Adventures of all kinds occur to men,  
 And feast and fight by turn."

They banqueted;  
 Before them was the gibbet or espousal:  
 They called the rose-cheeked damsels from their bowers,  
 And decked them in brocade of Chín; forthwith  
 These girls with fairy faces took the harp,  
 And fleeted day and night in merriment.  
 Anon the chamberlain got wind thereof,  
 And, since one acting on an idle rumour  
 Will shake the fruit down from the tree of bale,  
 He took upon him to investigate,

Inquiring who the man was, from what country,  
 And what he sought in coming to Túrán,  
 So learned the truth and, fearing for his life,  
 Went, as the only way to save himself,  
 Before Afrásiyáb and said to him :—  
 "Thy daughter hath a lover from Írán !"

The monarch called on God, and thou hadst said :—  
 "He trembled like the willow in a blast."  
 Then from the lashes of his eyes he wiped  
 The tears of blood and raged, and spake this saw :—  
 "One with a daughter in his house to guard  
 May have a crown indeed but is ill-starred."

He was confounded at Manízhá's deed,  
 Called to him princely Kurákhán and said :—  
 "Advise me in the matter of this wanton."

Then Kurákhán : "Examine with more care :  
 "If so it be there is no more to say,  
 But hearing is not seeing."

Instantly

The monarch looked at Garsíwaz and said :—  
 "What we have borne and still bear from Írán !  
 And why doth fortune link in one ill chain  
 Íranian troubles and an evil child ?  
 Go take with thee some prudent cavaliers,  
 Keep watch upon the palace—roof and gates—  
 Look well, and any man whom thou shalt see  
 Therein secure with bonds and drag to me."

V. 1079

## § 8

*How Garsíwaz brought Bízhan before Afrásiyáb*

As Garsíwaz approached the gate the sound  
 Of feast and revelry was heard within,  
 The music of the rebeck and the harp  
 Rose from the palace of Afrásiyáb.

The cavaliers seized on the roof and gates,  
 And occupied the outlets everywhere.  
 When Garsíwaz found that the palace-portal  
 Was fastened, and heard revels going on,  
 He broke down all obstructions, rushed within,  
 And sought the chamber where the stranger was.  
 Now when he reached the door and saw Bízhan  
 His blood boiled up with rage, for in that chamber  
 There were three hundred handmaids busied all  
 With harp and wine and singing, and among them,  
 With red wine at his lips and making merry,  
 Bízhan! Then Garsíwaz cried out in anguish:—  
 "O reckless and abandoned profligate!  
 Now art thou in the savage Lion's clutch.  
 How wilt thou 'scape with life?"

Bízhan writhed, thinking:—

"How can I fight unarmed, without Shabrang,  
 Or aught to ride? Luck, sure, hath gone to-day!  
 Where now is Gív son of Gúdarz, that I  
 Must throw away my life? I see no helper,  
 But God."

He always carried in his boot

V. 1080 A blue-steel dagger: this he drew and holding  
 The door exclaimed: "Bízhan am I and sprung  
 From that high chief of paladins and nobles,  
 Kishwád. None e'er shall break my skin unless  
 His body is aweary of its head,  
 And though 'twere Doomsday none should see my  
 back."

He cried to Garsíwaz: "Ill fortune thus  
 Hath dealt with me. Thou knowest my forefathers,  
 My monarch, and my rank among the chiefs:  
 If ye will fight I am prepared to bathe  
 My hands in blood in battle, and behead  
 Full many a Turkman chief; if thou wilt bear me  
 Before the king I will explain. Do thou

Ask him to spare my life, and make all end  
In happiness."

Then Garsiwaz, perceiving  
The resolution, the dexterity,  
And readiness to fight shown by Bizhan,  
Confirmed a covenant with him by oaths,  
And courteously advised him, thus obtaining  
The dagger from him by that covenant,  
And making him a prisoner by smooth words:  
Then bound him cheetah-like from head to foot.  
With fortune gone will prowess aught avail?  
Thus is it with yon hump-backed sky above,  
Thou'lt feel its harshness when it looketh love.

They carried him with sallow cheeks and eyes  
Fulfilled with tears before Afrásiyáb.  
The hero, when he came with pinioned arms  
And bare of head before the sovereign,  
Did reverence and said: "Vouchsafe, O king!  
To seek the truth. I came not to this court  
By any wish of mine; none is to blame.  
I left Irán to fight against wild boars,  
And chanced on this Túránian festival.  
I sent my kindred and my retinue  
To seek a falcon that had gone astray,  
And went to sleep beneath a cypress-tree,  
So that its shade might shield me from the sun.  
A fairy came. She spread her wings and took me,  
Still sleeping, in her arms. She left my charger,  
And bore me where the escort of thy daughter  
With troops of cavaliers and many litters  
Passed by upon the plain. Then there appeared  
Hemmed in by horse a Turkman parasol,  
And brand-new litter canopied with silk;  
Within a lovely Idol slept; her crown  
Was lying on her pillow. Suddenly  
The fairy called on Áhriman, and, rushing

Like wind among the horsemen, set me down  
 Inside the litter, and recited charms  
 Above the charmer there, that I might sleep  
 Until I reached the palace of the king;  
 So I was not to blame, nor hath Maníza  
 Been smirched by what hath passed. Assuredly  
 That fay had marred my fortune by her spells."

Afrásiyáb replied: "Thine evil day  
 Hath come apace. Departing from Írán  
 Thou soughtest fight and fame with mace and lasso;  
 Now with hands bound thou tellest women's dreams;  
 Like one bemused, and triest lies upon me  
 To save thy life."

V. 1082

Bízhan replied: "O king!  
 Hear what I say to thee and be advised.  
 Boars with their tusks and lions with their claws  
 Are always fit for fighting; so are heroes  
 That have their scimitars and bows and arrows;  
 But how when one is naked with bound hands,  
 The other in a panoply of steel?  
 How can a lion pounce without sharp claws  
 However fierce? If now the king would see  
 My prowess shown to all, let him provide  
 A horse and massive mace for me, and make  
 Choice of a thousand chieftains from the Turkmans;  
 Then hold me not a man if I leave one  
 Alive of all the thousand on the field."

The king regarded him with angry looks  
 At this, then turned to Garsíwaz, and said:—  
 "Dost thou not see that this fell Ábriman  
 Is meditating further ills for me,  
 And not contented with the evil done  
 Would fight as well? Take him bound hand and foot,  
 Just as he is, and rid the world of him.  
 Command to set a gibbet in the road  
 Before the gate, there hang the wretch alive,

And never speak of him to me again,  
So that no native of Írán may dare  
Henceforth to cast an eye upon Túrán."

They dragged him, stricken to the heart with anguish,  
His eyes a-stream, forth from Afrásiyáh,  
And, when Bízhan the wretched reached the door,  
His feet stuck in the mire made by his tears.  
He said: "If God Almighty hath decreed  
That I must die in miserable plight  
I do not fear the dying or the gibbet;  
My smart is for the warriors of Írán,  
And royal fathers' blame when I am dead.  
Alas! mine adversaries will exult,  
Their lust will all be satisfied upon me.  
Alas! the king of kings! the looks of Gíy!  
Alas! thus to be parted from the brave!  
Go, breezes! to the country of Írán,  
And bear my message to the well-loved Sháh.  
Tell him: 'Bízhan is in an evil case;  
His body is beneath the Lion's claws.'  
Say from me to Gúdarz son of Kishwád:—  
'My glory hath departed through Gurgín:  
He cast me into evil so that now  
I see not any one to succour me.'  
And to Gurgín: 'What greeting shall I have  
From thee, false warrior! beyond the grave?'"

V. 1083

## § 9

*How Pírán begged Bízhan's Life from Afrásiyáh*

Howbeit God had mercy on his youth,  
And foiled the King's intent, for as they dug  
A hole wherein to plant the gallows-tree,  
Pírán, for so it chanced, was seen approaching.  
Now when he reached the place and saw the road

All occupied by Turkmans under arms,  
 And that a lofty gibbet had been reared,  
 Wherefrom a twisted lasso dangled down,  
 He asked the people: "Wherefore is this gibbet?  
 Who hath incurred the anger of the king?"

Then Garsiwaz made answer: "For Bizhan  
 The Íránian, the monarch's enemy."

Pírán urged on his charger and, when near  
 Bizhan, beheld him stricken to the heart  
 And naked, with his two hands bound behind him  
 Firm as a rock, his mouth parched, his cheeks wan.  
 Pírán inquired of him: "How camest thou hither?  
 Thou camest from Írán no doubt for blood."

Bizhan related all that he had suffered  
 From his false friend. Pírán had pity on him,  
 And weeping bade them leave Bizhan awhile  
 V. 1084 Unhung; he said: "Detain him here that I  
 May have an audience with the sovereign,  
 And show him what will be the happiest course."

He galloped palace-ward, approached the king  
 In humble attitude with folded arms,  
 And walking quickly to the throne called down  
 With fervour blessings on Afrásiyáb.  
 When, like an honest guide and minister,  
 He stood before the throne, the king knew well  
 That he was standing there to ask a boon,  
 And smiling said to him: "What wouldst thou?  
 Speak.

None is more honoured with me than thyself.  
 If thy petition is for gold or jewels,  
 For realm or army, I will not withhold  
 My treasures. Why hast thou bestowed these pains?"

Pírán, the loyal, heard and kissed the ground,  
 Leaped up and said: "Sit on the throne for ever,  
 And may good fortune haunt no other place.  
 The monarchs of the earth proclaim thy praises,

The bright sun blesseth thee. Through thy good  
fortune

I need not horses, followers, or power.  
I ask not for myself, none of thy subjects  
Hath need to ask ; my fortune is thy rule,  
My stay thy glorious chiefs. Concerned am I  
Lest any suffer through my reticence,  
And my good name be lost. Have I not often  
Advised the king erewhile ? But since my words  
Availed not I have held my peace of late.  
'Slay not the son of Kai Kâüs,' I said,  
'Twill make thee enemies of Tûs and Rustam,  
And Siyâwush who is of Kaian race  
Hath girt his loins to serve thee loyally ;  
Peace will be broken and the Íránians  
Will trample on us with their elephants.'  
Yet didst thou out of simple wantonness  
Slay Siyâwush, and mingle bane with sweets.  
It may be that thou hast forgotten Gîv,  
And Rustam the brave chief of paladins.  
Hast thou not seen what ills the Íránians  
Have wrought upon the country of Tûrán  
By trampling with their beasts the greater part,  
And turning fortune's stream to bitterness ?  
As yet Zâl's sword-point is not worn away  
Inside its sheath, for Rustam scattereth heads  
Therewith, and spurteth blood upon the sun.  
Wilt thou seek war in peace, and wantonly  
Sniff at the bloom of bane ? If thou shalt shed  
Bîzhan's blood in this matter from Tûrán  
There will go up a dust-cloud of revenge,  
Thou art a wise king ; we are only lieges ;  
Ope thy heart's eye, consider how the Shâh  
Requited thee for former injuries.  
In sooth thou art provoking fresh demands,  
And bringing into fruit the tree of bale.

V. 1086

We cannot bear, O mighty sovereign,  
 And master of the world ! another war.  
 Thou knowest Gív, none better ! and brave Rustam,  
 That savage Crocodile, and him who will  
 Come forth to fight us for his grandson's sake,  
 Gúdarz, son of Kishwád, whose hand is steel !”

As he threw water on the raging fire  
 Afrásiyáb replied : “ Dost thou not know  
 What he hath done, and brought disgrace upon us  
 Both here and in Írán ? Dost thou not see  
 How mine abandoned daughter hath heaped shame  
 Upon my hoary head, and made the names  
 Of all my women-folk the common talk ?  
 For this disgrace all lands and mine own troops  
 Will ever make my court their laughing-stock ;  
 If he shall live all men will wag their tongues  
 At me, I shall be wretched and despised,  
 And ever from mine eyes shed tears of gall.”

Pírán did reverence oftentimes and replied :—  
 “ O monarch of good fortune and just speech !  
 ’Tis as the king hath said. His only object  
 Is his good name. But let my lord consider  
 The prudent counsel that I offer him.  
 Let us confine Bízhan with heavy chains,  
 Such that he would prefer death on the gibbet ;  
 ’Twill be a warning to the Íránians,  
 Who will not strive to injure us hereafter,  
 For no one readeth on the muster-roll  
 The names of captives in thy prison-house.”

The monarch acted as Pírán advised,  
 Perceiving that his heart and tongue agreed.  
 Good ministers with their good counsellings  
 Illume the Grace divine and throne of kings.

## § 10

*How Afrāsiyāb put Bizhan in Ward*

Afrāsiyāb commanded Garsiwaz:—

"Prepare a gloomy pit and weighty bonds,  
Secure with chains Bizhan's hands to a yoke  
Bridge-like, as Rūmans do, from head to foot  
Chain him and make all sure with heavy rivets;  
Then throw him in the pit head first—no more  
Of sun and moon for him! Take elephants,  
And fetch the boulder of the div Akwān,  
Which God raised from the ocean-depth and cast  
Upon a wood in Chin. Thus will I be  
Avenged upon Bizhan. Convey this stone,  
Which covereth the dungeon of Arzhang,  
Upon high-crested elephants, and cover  
Bizhan's, then leave him to go mad with anguish.  
Take horsemen, sack the palace of that wanton—  
Manizha, who hath shamed her quality—  
Deprive her of her fortune, crown, and state,  
And say to her: 'Thou wretched and accursed,  
Who art unworthy of the throne and crown!  
Thou hast abased my head among the kings,  
And cast my diadem upon the dust.'  
Then drag her naked to the pit and say:—  
'Behold him whom thou sawest on the throne  
Here in this pit! Thou art his Spring, console him,  
And wait upon him in his gloomy cell.'"

V. 1087

So Garsiwaz departed from the presence.  
They carried out the monarch's evil purpose;  
They haled the son of Giv back from the gallows,  
And bore him to the pit's mouth in his bonds,  
There fettered him from head to foot in iron,  
His waist with Rūman chains, his hands with gyves,  
While smiths with steel and hammers made secure

The massive rivetings, and then they flung him  
 Head-foremost down the pit and set the stone  
 Upon it. Garsíwaz thence led his troop  
 To where the daughter of Afrásiyáb

V. 1088

Dwelt, gave up all her treasury to spoil,  
 And made a fresh disposal of the wealth.  
 Manízha was reduced to naked feet,  
 Bare head, and single wrap. He hustled her  
 Forth to the pit. Her eyes wept tears of blood;  
 Her cheeks were like the spring.

"Behold," he said,

"Thy house and home! Henceforth thou art to be  
 This prisoner's drudge!"

He turned back, and Manízha,  
 The spouse of woe, roamed wailing o'er the plain.

Now when a day and night had passed she came  
 With lamentations to the pit, and made  
 A passage large enough to pass one hand.  
 Thereafter when the sun rose o'er the hills  
 She used to gather food at every door  
 By day-long wanderings and pass it through  
 The crevice to Bízhan, and weep. Thus she  
 Lived for a while in abject misery.

## § 11

*How Gurgín returned to Irán and lied about Bízhan*

When one week passed, and still Bízhan returned not,  
 Gurgín began to search on every side  
 In haste and bathed his face in tears of blood.  
 Repenting of his ill intents he sought  
 The place wherein Bízhan had gone astray,  
 Went all about the forest but saw no one,  
 And heard not e'en a twitter from the birds.  
 He sought too in the mead, and all at once

V. 1089

Spied in the distance on the river-bank,  
 With bridle broken and with saddle dragging,  
 With hanging lip and in an angry mood,  
 His comrade's steed, and knew : " Bízhan is sped !  
 He will not live to come back to Írán.  
 By gibbet or by prison or by bonds  
 Ill hath befallen him from Afrásiyáb."

Repentant and perplexed he flung his lasso,<sup>1</sup>  
 And turning led Bízhan's steed from the meadow  
 Back to his tent where he abode one day,  
 Then, sleepless and unresting, sought Írán.

The Sháh, on hearing that Gurgín had come  
 Without Bízhan, would fain have been the first  
 To question him, so told not Gív, yet Gív  
 Heard of his brave son's loss, rushed to the street,  
 Pierced to the heart with anguish and with cheeks  
 All tears, and cried : " Bízhan returneth not !  
 I wis not why he stayeth in Írmán."

Then, vengeful as a crocodile at heart,  
 He gave command to put the poplar saddle  
 Upon Kishwád's own bay, which he was wont  
 To hold reserved against the day of need,  
 And, having mounted, parted like a blast  
 To meet Gurgín and ask him where Bízhan  
 Was, and about the case. " Good sooth ! " he thought,  
 " Gurgín hath done him mischief secretly.  
 I will behead Gurgín or see my son."

V. 1090

Gurgín on catching sight of Gív dismounted,  
 Ran up to him and, wallowing in the dust  
 With head uncovered and torn cheeks, exclaimed :—  
 " O thou that art the chosen of the host,  
 Chief of Írán and captain of the Sháh !  
 Why hast thou come to meet me on my way ?  
 Why hast thou come thus weeping tears of blood ?  
 I shall not wish to live if aught more wretched

<sup>1</sup> " Il lâissa tomber son lacet " (Mohl)

Shall now betide me. All ashamed am I  
 To look thee in the face; I too am pouring  
 The hot blood from mine eyes, but be not troubled  
 About his life. No harm hath come to him  
 As I will prove to thee."

Gív, when he saw  
 His son's horse and Gurgín, all dust and dazed  
 Like one bemused, thus leading it, and when  
 He heard those words, fell from his steed and swooned.  
 His head was hidden by the dust. He rent  
 The raiment that he wore as paladin,  
 Plucked out his hair, and with a cry of anguish  
 Poured dust upon his head.

"O Thou," he said,  
 "Who art the Almighty Master of the sky,  
 And hast endowed my heart with sense and love!  
 I hold it good, now that my son is lost,  
 That thou shouldst snap my cord of life and take  
 My spirit to the mansions of the blest:  
 Thou knowest best the anguish of my heart.  
 I had no son but him to soothe my griefs  
 Or aid me; now ill hap hath severed us,  
 And I am left thus in the Dragon's maw!"

He asked Gurgín again: "How went it all?  
 Hath fate filled up his place or did he will  
 To quit thy sight? What ill befell him? Speak!  
 Who flung at him the meshes of the sky?  
 What dîv encountered him upon the mead?  
 Who murdered him and ruined everything?  
 How didst thou find this charger riderless?  
 Where didst thou quit Bîzhan?"

Gurgín replied:—  
 "Compose thyself and listen. In respect  
 To fighting with the wild boars in the wood,  
 Know, O thou paladin! and understand,  
 And be for aye the lustre of the throne,

We went to fight the boars and reached Írmán.  
We saw a wood converted to a waste,  
With trees cut down and trampled pasturage.  
It was a haunt of boars, the people melted  
Because of them! We raised our spears in fight,  
And made a mighty shouting in the wood;  
Wild boars came charging like so many mountains,  
Not one by one but everywhere in herds.  
We battled like two lions, and day failed  
Before our hearts were satiate of strife.  
We threw their elephantine carcasses  
In heaps and prized their teeth out. Thence we set  
Our faces toward Írán and merrily  
Went after game. An onager was started,  
And none will see a goodlier sight. Its coat  
Was like Gulgún's, the charger of Gúdarz;  
Its face was like Farhád's grey Shabáhang,  
With limbs like the Símurgh's, and hoofs like steel.  
'Twas like Bizhan's Shabrang in head and ear  
And tail, its neck was lion-like, its speed  
Like wind. Thou wouldst have said: 'Its sire is  
Rakhsh.'

Like some tall elephant it charged Bízhan,  
Who flung his lasso o'er its head. To fling  
Was one with to be borne away! Off rushed  
The onager! Bízhan sped after it,  
And through the beast's pace and the horseman's  
dust

A reek arose, the earth heaved like the sea,  
The lassoer and onager both vanished.  
My steed was weary, so I ran o'er hill  
And plain, but found no traces of Bízhan,  
Except this steed whose saddle dragged behind.  
My heart burned at his plight: 'How will he fare  
In his contention with the onager?'  
I tarried long upon the pasture, searching

On all sides for him, and have come back hopeless,  
For that fierce onager was the White Dív !”

Shrewd Gív, on hearing, deemed : “ Bízhan is sped !”  
He marked Gurgín's confused account, those eyes  
That could not look him in the face, those cheeks  
Grown wan with terror of the Sháh, that body  
A-tremble, and that conscience-stricken heart,  
And ascertaining that his son was lost,  
And that the whole account was fraudulent,  
Was moved by Áhriman to lay Gurgín  
Dead on the road in vengeance for Bízhan,  
The well-beloved, although disgrace might follow.  
Albeit on reflection he perceived  
That this would leave the matter dark, and said :—  
“ What shall I gain by slaying him save pleasing  
Malignant Áhriman ? How will it aid  
Bízhan to slay Gurgín ? We must employ  
Another means ; revenge is no great task ;  
He is no wall to stop my lance's point ;  
So let us tarry till his guilt is clear  
Before the Sháh.”

V. 1093

He cried out at Gurgín :—  
“ Thou wicked and injurious Áhriman !  
Thou hast deprived me of my Sun and Moon—  
The choicest of the horsemen and my Sháh—  
And set me searching all the world for aid.  
Where through thy practice, guile, and lies shall I  
Henceforward find contentment, rest, and sleep ?  
I will not suffer thee to go at large  
Until I have an audience with the Sháh ;  
Then with my poniard will I wreak on thee  
Revenge for him who was mine Eye to me.”

## § 12

*How Giv brought Gurgin before Khusrâu*

With bloodshot eyes and vengeance in his heart  
 Giv went before the Sháh, blessed him, and said :—  
 " For ever fleet the world in joy, O king !  
 Thou blessed, well-starred monarch ! seest thou not  
 What hath befallen me ? I had one son—  
 A youth who was my care both night and day.  
 I wept for fear of danger to him, burned  
 For fear of losing him ; and now, O Sháh !  
 Gurgín hath come back with an idle tongue,  
 With guilty soul, and evil news of him—  
 My stainless and illustrious minister.  
 Gurgín hath brought a steed in disarray,  
 But not another token of Bizhan !  
 If now my lord will carefully consider  
 My case, and see me righted in the matter,  
 He will do justice for me on Gurgín—  
 The man that put this dust upon my head."

The Sháh was troubled at Giv's grief, assumed  
 The crown in anger, sat upon the throne  
 With pallid cheeks in sorrow for Bizhan,  
 And said to Giv : " What is Gurgín's account ?  
 Where saith he that he left his upright comrade ?"

V. 1094

Giv told the tale about his gallant son  
 As given by Gurgín. Then said Khusrâu :—  
 " Brood not nor fret ; Bizhan is safe ; be easy  
 And hopeful touching that lost son of thine,  
 For I but now heard from the archinages—  
 The men of wisdom shrewd of heart and famous—  
 That I shall lead the Íránian cavaliers  
 Against Túrân anon to seek revenge  
 For Siyâwush, and with mine elephants

Destroy that land. Bízhan will take the field  
And fight like Áhriman. Depart in peace ;  
Good sooth, I greatly long for him myself."

So Gív withdrew in tears, pale and distraught.  
Gurgín, on coming to the palace-gate,  
Found it deserted ; all the paladins  
Had gone with Gív lamenting for Bízhan.  
Gurgín, his wicked soul fulfilled with shame,  
Went in to audience. Having reached Khusrau  
He kissed the ground and offered reverence,  
Then laid the boars' tusks hard as diamonds  
Before the throne and did obeisance, saying :—  
" May Kai Khusrau be all victorious,  
His life like New Year's Day, and may the heads  
Of all thy foes be severed by the shears,  
E'en as the heads of these wild boars."

The Sháh  
Gazed on the tusks and asked : " How went the  
journey ?

Where did Bízhan part company ? What evil  
Hath Áhriman wrought on him ? "

When Khusrau  
Spake thus Gurgín stood all confused with tongue  
That idly blabbed and guilty soul. His cheeks  
Were pale, he shook in terror of the Sháh,  
And babbled much and incoherently  
Of forest, onager, and pasturage.  
Now, when his words accorded not, Khusrau,  
Perceiving him malicious and confused,  
Was wroth and drove him out, upbraiding him,  
And saying : " Hast thou heard not Zál's old saw :—  
' To meet the offspring of Gúdarz in strife  
Would put a period to a lion's life ? '  
But for the shame, and that thou wouldest make  
An evil ending in the sight of God,  
I would bid Áhriman pluck off thy head,

As 'twere a bird's."

Then said he to a smith:—  
"Forge heavy shackles with the rivets strong."

He had Gurgín's feet fettered presently,  
Because the knave is schooled by bonds, and said  
To Gív: "Compose thyself. Do thou be instant  
In seeking for him everywhere, and I  
Will send out many cavaliers well armed  
In all directions to obtain some news  
About him, and be prompt and vigilant;  
But, if I hear not soon, still keep thy wits  
And wait for Farwardín, until the sun—  
The object of our worship—groweth bright.  
When roses glad the garden, breezes strew  
The petals o'er thy head, when earth is donning  
Its robe of green, and zephyrs sigh o'er roses,  
Then shall my pious prayers rise to Urmuzd—  
Prayers that our God commandeth. Then will I  
Call for the cup that mirroreth the world,  
And stand before God's presence. In that cup  
I shall behold the seven climes of earth,  
Both field and fell and all the provinces,  
Will offer reverence to mine ancestors,  
My chosen, gracious lords, and thou shalt know  
Where thy son is. The cup will show me all."

Gív was rejoiced, ceased from solicitude,  
And smiling did obeisance, saying thus:—  
"May time and earth ne'er be deprived of thee!  
May heaven above attend thy will, and may  
No ill befall thee from the evil eye."

When Gív had gone the Sháh sent cavaliers  
To search in every quarter for Bizhan;  
In all Írán and all Túrán they sought  
For traces of him, but discovered naught.

## § 13

*How Kai Khusrau saw Bízhan in the Cup that  
showed the World*

When jocund New Year's Day arrived Gív yearned  
For consultation with that glorious cup,  
And came, bent double on his son's account  
But hopeful, to Khusrau who, seeing him  
With shrunken cheeks and sorely stricken heart,  
Went and arrayed himself in Rúman garb  
To seek God's presence. Then before the Maker  
He cried and oftentimes blessed the Shining One,<sup>1</sup>  
Imploring of the Succourer succour, strength,  
And justice on pernicious Áhriman,  
And, thence returning to his throne, assumed  
The Kaian crown, took up the cup, and gazed.  
He saw the seven climes reflected there,  
And every act and presage of high heaven,  
Their fashion, cast, and scope, made manifest.  
From Aries to Pisces he beheld  
All mirrored in it—Saturn, Jupiter,  
Mars, Leo, Sol and Luna, Mercury,  
And Venus. In that cup the wizard-king  
Was wont to see futurity. He scanned  
The seven climes for traces of Bízhan,  
And, when he reached the Kargasárs, beheld him  
By God's decree fast fettered in the pit,  
And praying in his misery for death,  
With one, the daughter of a royal race,  
Attending him. The Sháh, with smiles that lighted  
The dais, turned his face to Gív and said :—  
" Bízhan is yet alive ; be of good cheer ;  
Thou wilt not mind, I wot, his being chained  
And prisoned since his life is whole in him,

V. 1097

<sup>1</sup> " Il invoqua longtemps ses grâces sur la coupe brillante " (Mohl).

For he is now a prisoner in Túrán,  
 Attended by a maid of noble birth.  
 Yet filled am I with sorrow for his plight,  
 He hath such travail, hardship, and affliction;  
 And both of them are weeping like a cloud  
 When it is springtide, such a life is theirs!  
 He hath no hope of seeing kith or kin,  
 But pineth trembling like a willow-bough,  
 Blood in his eyes and anguish in his heart.  
 He calleth on his kinsmen and he weepeth  
 As 'twere a cloud in spring; his life is such  
 That he desireth death! Who will come forward  
 To rescue him, who rise with girded loins?  
 Who is there that will brave the Dragon's breath,  
 Who from this durance liberate Bízhan?  
 None save deft Rustam—he who from the deep  
 Will drag the crocodile. Gird up thy girdle,  
 Haste to Nímruz, and rest not night or day.  
 Bear him my letter and breathe naught hereof.  
 Him will I summon to me, let him know  
 The case, and soon, O Gíy! abate thy woe."

V. 1098

## § 14

*How Khusráu wrote a Letter to Rustam*

A scribe was called, the Sháh instructed him  
 To write to Rustam as from lord to liege:—  
 "O paladin by birth and worshipful,  
 Exalted o'er the warriors of the world!  
 Thou dost remind me of thine ancestors,  
 And art for ever girdled for the fray.  
 Thou Heart of monarchs and thou Prop of kings,  
 With loins girt up to succour every one!  
 Pards yield them to thy manhood, crocodiles  
 Howl in the deep for fear of thee. Thou cleansedst

The world of the Mázandaránian dívs,  
 And torest off the heads of evil men.  
 How many a crownéd head hast thou dethroned,  
 And severed from the dais! Many a foe  
 Is dead through thee, and many a land laid waste.  
 Chief paladin and refuge of the host!  
 Thine influence is mighty with the Sháhs;  
 Thou hast o'erthrown all sorcerers with thy mace,  
 And by thy bearing lit the crown of kings.  
 As for Afrásiyáh and for the Khán,  
 Thy name is writ in full upon their signets.  
 'Twould break the heart of any to undo  
 Knots tied by thee while thou undoeest all,  
 And art a blessed heaven to the Kaians.  
 God, who hath given thee elephantine might,  
 Breast, arm, and hand, and glorious birth, bestowed  
 them

V. 1099

For succouring those that cry, and lifting them  
 From their dark pit. An instance for thine aid,  
 And to a worthy kinsman, hath occurred,  
 Such as no scion of Gúdarz before  
 Experienced from dív-faced Túránians.  
 Gúdarz and Gív both place their trust in thee,  
 Who art a hero now in every land;  
 Thou know'st what place they have in mine esteem,  
 Thou know'st their courage, speech, and prudent  
 counsel;

Regard not then this thing as burdensome,  
 And ask whatever men and means thou wilt,  
 Because this family ne'er grieved till now:  
 The world hath heard of few more glorious.  
 Gív had not any son excepting this,  
 Who was at once a son and succourer.  
 Gív's influence with me is very great;  
 He hath been both my grandsire's friend and mine;  
 I always find him where I look for him.

And he hath stood by me in weal and woe.  
 When thou hast read my letter tarry not,  
 But rise and come to me with Giv forthwith,  
 That we may take advice that shall result  
 In all points gloriously. I will provide  
 Men, treasure, and all requisites. I swear  
 By thine exalted name and glorious footsteps  
 That thou shalt work thy will upon Túrán.  
 Take order for the road : Bízhan will be  
 Delivered haply from captivity."

## § 15

*How Giv bore the Letter of Kai Khusrau to Rustam*

Giv took the letter when the Sháh had sealed it,  
 Did reverence and, departing to his house,  
 Prepared to take his journey to Sístán.  
 He mounted all the horsemen of his kin,  
 And, having first commended him to God,  
 Departed through the desert to the Hírmund,  
 As one that rideth post, or like the game  
 That he put up, performing two days' journey  
 In one. With wounded hearts and eager steps  
 The party faced the deserts and the heights.

Now when the watchman saw Giv from the look-out  
 He passed the word on to Zábulistán :—  
 "A cavalier with mounted troops hath reached  
 The Hírmund ; a standard fluttereth behind him ;  
 A falchion of Kábul is in his hand."

Zál heard the watchman's shout and bade his steed  
 Be bridled, then pricked forth to meet the comers,  
 Who haply might prove foes, but when he saw  
 Giv's withered face he was astound and hasted,  
 Supposing : "Something hath befallen the Sháh  
 Since Giv hath been sent hither from Írán !"

V. 1101

When near at hand the paladin and escort  
 Drew up across the road and greeted Zál,  
 Who asked about the Íránians and the Sháh,  
 The chieftains and Túránians. Gív then gave  
 To Zál the greetings of the great—the Sháh's  
 And high-born warriors'—and told his anguish  
 For his lost son: "Thou seest me wan, mine insteps  
 All dappled leopard-like with tears of blood!"  
 Then asked where Rustam was, and Zál replied:—  
 "He will return from hunting onager  
 At sunset."

"I will go," Gív said, "and see him;  
 I have a letter for him from Khusrau."

"Go not," Zál answered, "he will come anon,  
 So till he cometh tarry in the house,  
 And pass one day with us in happiness."

Reflecting on the ease they reached Zál's palace,  
 And even as Gív entered Rustam came.  
 Gív went to meet him and, on drawing nigh,  
 Dismounted from his horse and did obeisance.  
 His heart was yearning and he wept. When Rustam  
 Saw Gív heart-stricken and in tears he thought:—  
 "Írán then and the Sháh—our age's Moon—  
 Have perished!"

Lighting and embracing Gív

He asked about the wearer of the crown—  
 Khusrau—about Gúdarz, Tús, Gustaham,  
 And all the warriors both great and small—  
 Shápúr, Ruḥhám, Bízhan, Farhád, Gurgín,  
 And every one. At mention of Bízhan  
 Gív uttered an involuntary cry.

V. 1102

And said to Rustam: "O thou worshipful,  
 The choicest of the princes of the earth!  
 Joy hath returned to me at sight of thee,  
 And through thy kindly greetings and thy words.  
 All those whom thou hast named are well and send

Thee salutation, peace, and messages,  
 Except Bízhan, O champion of the mighty !  
 Who is reported fettered in a dungeon.  
 Now seest thou not what stroke of evil fortune  
 Hath fallen full upon my hoary head ?  
 I had but one son in the world, and he  
 Was both a son and upright minister,  
 And I have lost him ! None e'er saw our race  
 In such affliction ! Ever since have I  
 Been in the saddle, as thou seest me,  
 And speeding like the bright sun, night and day,  
 Just like the mad, to find some trace of him !  
 The<sup>s</sup> Sháh hath in his world-reflecting cup. . . .  
 He stood before the Maker, much imploring  
 And praising on the royal feast—the Urmuzd  
 Of Farwardín—then left the Fane of Fire,  
 Went to his throne, girt up his loins, assumed  
 The crown, and set the shining cup before him.  
 He searched therein past measure for Bízhan,  
 And indicated him as in Túrán,  
 In heavy fetters and disastrous plight,  
 And, having thus revealed him by the cup,  
 Sent me to thee in haste. I come in hope,  
 Although my cheeks are pale and dim mine eyes,  
 Because I look to thee alone for aid,  
 Who girdest up thy loins to succour all."

Gív spake, the lashes of his eyes were charged  
 With tears of gall, and from his heart he heaved  
 A chilling sigh. When he had given the letter  
 To Rustam he narrated what Gurgín  
 Had done, then bitterly bewailed Bízhan,  
 And poured down tears of blood upon his breast ;  
 For he and Rustam had been long akin,  
 That chieftain's daughter was the wife of Gív,  
 While Rustam had Gív's sister for his spouse,  
 And gallant Farámarz by that brave dame.

Bízhan withal, that hero eminent  
 In every company, had for his mother  
 The daughter of the elephantine Rustam,  
 Who said to Gív: "Be not concerned hereat,  
 Because I will not take from Rakhsh the saddle  
 Till I have clasped Bízhan's hand in mine own,  
 And have demolished all his bonds and prison.  
 By God's strength, since the Sháh requireth it,  
 Will I release him from that darksome pit."

## § 16

*How Rustam made a Feast for Gív*

Thence they departed to the hall of Rustam,  
 Discussing as they went what course to take.  
 When Rustam had perused the monarch's letter  
 He was o'erwhelmed at what Khusrau had said,  
 And all the praises that the worldlord Sháh  
 Gave to his famous captain of the host.  
 Then Rustam said to Gív: "I will dispatch,  
 And ready me to go as he commandeth.  
 I know how thou hast laboured, thine achievements,  
 And thy concernment in all enterprise.  
 How mighty is thine influence with me,  
 Who hast wooed war on every battlefield,  
 Alike in the revenge for Siyáwush,  
 And in the war against Mázandarán:  
 Thou hast borne travail too in coming hither,  
 And faring by a route so arduous.  
 I joy exceedingly to look upon thee  
 Although I am concerned about Bízhan.  
 I cannot bear to see thee in such grief,  
 And fortune-stricken. As the Sháh commandeth  
 In this his letter I will take the road,  
 And also out of my concern for thee

Will undertake the matter of Bízhan,  
 Will do my best and, if All-holy God  
 Shall leave my body and my soul together,  
 I will not grudge Bízhan life, troops, and treasure.  
 I gird me in God's strength and by the fortune  
 Of our victorious worldlord. I will rescue  
 Bízhan from bondage and from darksome pit,  
 And will re-seat him on the famous dais.  
 Abide with me three days in joy, quaff wine,  
 Be free from care, for no division parteth  
 My house from thine, and thou and I are one  
 In treasure, soul, and body."

At his words

Gív sprang up, kissed his hands and head and feet,  
 Applauded him, and said: "O man of name,  
 Endowed with strength and manhood, worth and  
 fortune!

Mayst thou have ever thus the heart and strength  
 Of elephants and archimages' prudence.  
 Thou dost partake all excellence, and so  
 Hast cleansed my heart from rust."

When Rustam saw

Gív's heart content, and felt himself assured  
 That all would turn out well, he told his steward:—  
 "Set out the board and call the chiefs and sages."

Then Farámarz, Zawára, Zál, and Gív  
 Sat at the banquet of the valiant chief.  
 Cup-bearers and musicians with their harps  
 Came to the hall of jewelled tracery;  
 The handles of the goblets blushed with wine,  
 The harps descanted and the cups went round.  
 Carousing thus in Rustam's palace Gív  
 Abode three days and made no haste to leave.

## § 17

*How Rustam came to Khusráu*

The fourth day they prepared to go, 'twas time;  
 So Rustam bade to pack the loads and make  
 All ready for the journey to Írán,  
 While at his gate his noble horsemen gathered,  
 Dight for the road. He came forth, mounted Rakhsh,  
 Girt up his loins, put on a Rúman vest,  
 And hung his grandsire's mace beside the saddle,  
 Intent on feats of arms and strategy.  
 Rakhsh struck the sky above him, but the head  
 Of crown-bestowing Rustam topped the sun.  
 They took their loads up, leaving Farámarz  
 Within Zábul, and Rustam, Gív, and troops—  
 Picked Zábulis, a hundred thousand strong—  
 Set forth upon the march toward Írán:  
 All hurried on with vengeance in their hearts.  
 When Rustam reached Írán, and when the throne  
 Of Kai Khusráu was coming into sight,

V. 1106

A sweet breeze wafted to him in its love  
 And gaiety the welcome of the sky.  
 Then Gív drew near to Rustam saying thus:—  
 "'Tis fit that I go first and tell the Sháh  
 That matchless Rakhsh hath measured all the road."  
 Said Rustam: "Go rejoicing, say to him:—  
 'Be quit of thy distress.'"

When Gív approached  
 The royal presence with much praise and homage  
 The Sháh demanded: "Where was Rustam left?  
 How have ye sped?"

Gív answered: "Sháh renowned;  
 Thy fortune bringeth all things to success.  
 He disobeyed thee not, I found his heart  
 Devoted to thee. When I gave thy letter

He pressed it to his face and eyes, and hitched  
His reins to mine as should a faithful liege.  
I have pushed on that I might tell the Sháh  
That matchless Rustam is upon the road."

"But," said Khusrau, "where is that Prop of chiefs,  
That Seed of loyalty? We needs must honour  
One both so good and faithful."

Giv replied:—

"Two stages back; I came on first to tell thee."

Then Kai Khusrau gave orders to the sages,  
The royal princes, and the mighty men,  
To go forth with the host to welcome Rustam,  
Who came obedient to the Sháh's command.  
They told Gúdarz son of Kishwád, Farhád,  
And Tús—chief of the offspring of Naudar.  
The more part of the warriors and nobles,  
Mace-bearers and foe-slayers, then arose  
And dight themselves to go and meet the guest,  
According to the usance of Káuś.  
The world was azure-dim with horsemen's dust,  
The standards fluttered, and the chargers neighed.  
When they drew near to Rustam they dismounted  
And did obeisance. That chief paladin,  
Alighting, greeted all the veterans,  
And asked about the Sháh and how things went  
Beneath resplendent sun and shining moon;  
Then swiftly as the bright Ázargashasp  
The warriors and Rustam all remounted.  
He came before that Sháh, who loved his lieges,  
With measured tread and offered reverence,  
For 'twas his duty to revere and love,  
Then raised his head, gave praise, and said: "Be  
thou

Associate with the throne throughout thy years,  
Urmuzd himself be present in this court,  
Bahman be guardian of thy throne and crown,

May good Ardšibihisht, Bahrám, and Tír  
 Watch over thee, and may Shahrír endow thee  
 With triumph, fame, Grace, majesty, and prowess.  
 Be thine own sentinel Sapandármad,  
 May wisdom be the life of thy bright soul ;  
 May Dai and Farwardín bless thee, the door  
 Of ill be barred, and may Ázar make night  
 As bright as day to thee, thyself rejoice,  
 Thy crown illumine the world, and may Ábán  
 Make all thine undertakings glorious ;  
 Be turning heaven before thee as a slave,  
 And may Murdád protect thy flocks and herds  
 Be ever glad in person and in fortune,  
 May ancestor and issue smile on thee,  
 And may Khurdád spread joy o'er field and fell."

V. 1108

When Rustam standing there had offered praise  
 The king of kings accorded him a seat  
 Upon the throne, and said : " Thou art well come ;  
 Far be the hand of evil from thy life.  
 Thou art the paladin of this world's Kaians,  
 Who readest others but art read of none,  
 The Kaians' choice, the backbone of the host,  
 The warden of Írán, the army's refuge.  
 Thou hast rejoiced me by the sight of thee,  
 Who art so vigilant and worshipful !  
 Zawára, Farámarz, and Zál—are they  
 Hale, happy, and content ? "

And Rustam answered,

Descending from the throne and kissing it :—  
 " O Sháh most honoured and of sleepless fortune !  
 Thereby all three are well and happy : blest  
 Indeed is he whom thou rememberest."

## § 18

*How Kai Khusräu held Feast with the Paladins*

The chamberlain threw wide the garden-gate,  
And made all ready for a royal revel.  
He gave command to set the golden crown  
And throne beneath a bower that scattered roses,  
And laid down court-brocade o'er all the pleasance,  
Which shone as 'twere a lamp. They had a tree  
Set up above the Sháh's throne to enshadow  
It and the crown. The stem thereof was silver;  
The branches were of gold and jewelry,  
The jewels manifold and clustering,  
The leaves of emeralds and carnelians,  
And fruit hung down, like earrings, from the boughs.  
The fruits were golden oranges and quinces  
All hollow and all perforate like reeds,  
And charged with musk worked up with wine that  
when

The Sháh set any one upon the throne  
The breeze might shower musk on him; such showers  
Descended on the Sháh what time he came,  
And took his seat upon the throne of gold.  
All the cup-bearers wearing coronets  
Of jewels, gold brocade, and robes of Chín,  
With torques and earrings, stood before the throne,  
All clad in gold. All hearts were full of mirth.  
The wine was in their hands, their cheeks were flushed,  
Though no one was bemused, like cercis-bloom,  
Or like brocade of Chín. The aloe-wood  
Burned and the harps descanted. Then the Sháh  
Gave orders to the chamberlain on duty,  
And said: "Call Tûs, Gúdarz, and all the chiefs."

He ordered Rustam to approach the throne,  
And sit with him beneath the tree. He said:—

"Thou happy bond 'twixt fortune and ourselves!  
 Thou art a shield betwixt Írán and ill  
 For aye with outstretched wings like the Simurgh,  
 And oft hast toiled for country and for king.  
 Thou knowest how the offspring of Gúdarz  
 In peace and war, in profit and in loss,  
 Stand in my presence with their loins girt up,  
 And always are my guides to what is good,  
 While, more than all, Gív shielded me from harm.  
 Such grief ne'er came before upon this house  
 (What greater sorrow than to lose a son?)  
 And wert thou not to undertake the task  
 I see none other helper in the world.  
 Now remedy this matter of Bizhan's,  
 Who hath been ill-entreated by Túrán,  
 And take of steeds and armour, men and treasure,  
 Whate'er is needed. Think it not a toil."

When Rustam heard he kissed the ground, sprang up,  
 And blessed the Sháh: "O thou fair-famed," he said,  
 "Who like the sun art potent everywhere!  
 Be greed and wrath and need afar from thee,  
 And may thy foe's heart burn and agonize.  
 Thou art Sháh, lord, and chief above all kings,  
 And monarchs are the dust upon thy feet.  
 The throne, the bright sun, and the shining moon  
 Have never looked on such another Sháh.  
 Thou hast discerned between the good and bad,  
 And bound the Dragon with thy charms and chains.  
 My mother gave me birth to toil for thee;  
 Thine own part is enjoyment and repose.  
 I am obedient to the Sháh's commands,  
 And go where thou shalt bid. By royal Grace,  
 And by my massive mace, I plucked the heart  
 Out of the divs erst in Mázarán;  
 E'en so for Gív sake, though the sky should rain  
 Fire on my head, I will not heed and, though

The spear-points reach the lashes of mine eyes,  
I will not turn rein from Khusrau's behest,  
But by thy Grace will compass this achievement,  
And ask for neither chief nor warriors."

When Rustam had thus said, Gúdarz and Giv  
With Fariburz, Farhád, the brave Shápúr,  
And other chiefs, invoked on him God's blessing.  
They took the cup and, pledging Zál and Rustam,  
Became bemused with wine. Thus revelling  
The Sháh oped festively the door of spring.

## § 19

*How Rustam made Petition for Gurgín to the Sháh*

Gurgín heard bruit of Rustam and, aware  
That thus a key to loose his grief had come,  
Dispatched this message: "Man of fortune, Grace,  
And fame, thou Tree of greatness, loyalty,  
And treasure, Gate of noble men and Bond  
Of bale! if words of mine afflict thee not  
I will address thee touching what I did.  
Mark the behaviour of this hump-backed sky  
In quenching wantonly the light within me,  
And pointing out to me the path of darkness!  
'Twas written thus, and what hath been hath been.  
I will lie down in fire before the Sháh  
If I may find forgiveness; all is over  
With my hoar head if my good name be lost;  
So, if thou wilt plead for me, I will go,  
Swift as a mountain-sheep, along with thee.  
And wallow in the dust before Bizhan  
If I may win mine unstained honour back."

V. 1111

When Rustam heard he heaved a deep, cold sigh;  
The anguish shown and message sent perturbed him;  
He grieved at that request so fondly urged,

And bade the envoy: "Go, return, and say:—  
 'Insensate wretch! hast heard not what the leopard  
 Said by the deep stream to the crocodile:—  
 "'If passion gain the upper hand of wit,  
 Then nobody will 'scape the clutch of it"?'  
 The sage that quelleth passion hath a record  
 As of a noble Lion; thine hath been  
 An ancient fox's, yet thou didst o'erlook  
 The snare! I should not grant thy frantic wish  
 That I should bring thy name before Khusrau,  
 Yet, since I see thee in such straits and all  
 Confounded, I will ask him to forgive thee,  
 And lighten thy dark moon. Then, if Bizhan  
 By God the Ruler of the world's command  
 Escape, thou wilt be freed and save thy life  
 From Giv's revenge. Should heaven will otherwise  
 Deem life and person as unworth thy love.  
 First will I go forth on my quest and vengeful  
 In God's strength at the bidding of the Sháh,  
 But if I fail that man of prowess Giv  
 Will then take wreak on thee for his brave son.'"

V. 1112

Thus passed a night and day, and Rustam spake  
 Naught to the Sháh, but when upon the morrow  
 The sun displayed its crown and took its seat  
 Upon its silver-sheening ivory throne,  
 Came Rustam flying unto Kai Khusrau  
 To ask a boon of that victorious Sháh  
 While speaking of Gurgín, his fallen fortune,  
 And wretched plight. The Sháh said: "Chieftain  
 mine!

Thou wouldst then break my bonds and break with me,  
 Because I swore by throne, crown, Mars, and Venus,  
 And sun and moon: 'Gurgín shall see but ill  
 From me unless Bizhan be freed from bondage.'  
 Excepting this ask of me what thou wilt  
 Of swords and signet-rings, of thrones and crowns."

He answered : " Virtuous and famous prince !  
 If he intended harm he suffereth,  
 And is prepared to offer up his life ;  
 But if the Sháh will not forgive him first  
 He will be outcast from the Faith and honour.  
 Whoever turneth from the way of wisdom  
 Will writhe for his ill-doing at the last.  
 Vouchsafe to call to mind Gurgín's exploits,  
 How he hath taken part in every fight,  
 And been a champion with thine ancestors ;  
 If for my sake the Sháh will pardon him  
 His fortunes may be somewhat brightened yet."

The Sháh, that Rustam might not plead in vain,  
 Released Gurgín from gloomy pit and chain.

## § 20

*How Rustam equipped his Escort*

The Sháh asked Rustam : " When wilt thou depart  
 For this campaign ? Demand whate'er thou wilt—  
 Troops, treasure, and companions for the journey.  
 Malevolent Afrásiyáb, I fear me,  
 Will not long spare Bízhan. The king is headstrong,  
 And the injurious Dív, who taught him magic,  
 Anon will turn his heart aside and prompt him  
 To slay our swordsman."

V. 1113

Rustam thus replied :—

" I will achieve this enterprise by stealth,  
 For only craft will loosen such a coil.  
 We must not give occasion for alarm,  
 But set off in the guise of merchantmen,  
 And tarry for a while within Túrán.  
 This is a case for drawing in the rein,  
 And not a time for maces, swords, and spear-points.  
 I shall require much silver, gold, and gems ;

We start in hope but we shall stay in fear.  
I shall need garments too and carpetings  
For giving presents and as merchandise."

On hearing Rustam's words Khusrau commanded  
His treasurer to bring him whatsoever  
His minister directed from the hoards  
Laid up of yore. The royal treasurer  
Undid the purses and bestrewed the throne  
With jewels and dínárs. Came matchless Rustam,  
Inspected all, and chose whate'er was needed.  
He took ten camel-burdens of dínárs,  
Five score of other ware; he next commanded  
The chamberlain: "Choose out a thousand horse.  
Some of the proud and noble lion-men  
Must also gird themselves—Gurgín and Zanga,  
The son of Sháwarán, next Gustaham,  
The Falchion of the brave, and fourth Guráza,  
The sentinel of warriors, throne, and crown,  
To lead the host, Ruhhám, Farhád, two men  
Of valour, and Ashkash that lion-hero.  
These seven warriors must make them ready  
To overlook the escort and the goods."  
These, every one in his allotted part,  
Vied in their preparations for the start.

V. 1114

## § 21

*How Rustam went to the City of Khutan to Firdn*

Then Rustam bade those chieftains, those inace-  
wielders,  
Those dealers out of death, to gird themselves  
At dawn what time the officer on duty  
Came to the gate. At daybreak, when the cock crew,  
They bound the drums upon the elephants,  
While Rustam came forth like a lofty cypress,

Mace in his hand and lasso on his saddle.  
He left the royal portal with his troops,  
And called down blessings on the land. The chiefs  
Went first, the soldiers followed, and all took  
Their lives in hand, their guides were spears and  
arrows,

And every hand had been imbrued in blood.

When Rustam reached the marches of Túrán  
He picked out all the chiefs, then bade the troops:—  
“Abide here cheerfully, move not unless  
All-holy God deprive me of my life,  
Be dight for battle and prepared for bloodshed.”

Thus in those marches of Írán he left them,  
And went, he and the chiefs, towards Túrán.  
He doffed his mail and donned a merchant's dress,  
The warriors undid their silver girdles,  
And he arrayed them all in woollen robes.  
They fared toward Túrán—a caravan  
All scent and colour. There were eight fine steeds,  
One Rakhsh, the others were the warriors' mounts,  
Ten camels bearing bales of jewelry,  
And five score bearing soldiers' uniforms.  
The waste rang like the horn of Tahmúras  
With bells and shouting. Rustam journeyed on  
Until he reached the city of Pírán,  
For there was one in those Túránian marches  
Belonging to that chief, but he himself  
Was at the chase; his palace was unguarded.  
Now when he came back from the hunting-field  
The matchless Rustam saw him on the road,  
And having covered over with brocade  
A golden goblet filled with precious stones  
Gave it and therewithal two splendid steeds,  
With saddles made of gold adorned with jewels,  
To the attendants, and preceding them  
Strode to Pírán's throne swiftly, did obeisance,

And said: "O prince whose fortune and whose prowess  
Are famous in Irán and in Túrán!

Thy Grace and crown are peerless, for thou art  
King's minister and glory of the throne."

Pírán, so God ordained it, knew not Rustam,  
But questioned him and said: "Whence art thou?  
Speak!

What man art thou and wherefore hast thou come?"

He said: "I am thy subject. God assigned me  
A cistern in thy city. I have measured

A long and grievous journey from Irán

To traffic in Túrán. I sell and buy,

And deal in every sort of merchandise.

My soul hath good assurance of thy love,

Such was the power of hope within my heart!

If now the paladin will take me 'neath

His wing I will buy cattle and sell jewels.

Through thy just dealing none will do me hurt,

The cloud-rack of thy love rain gems upon me."

Then Rustam offered him before the lords  
The cup of royal gems, and splendid Arabs  
With coats too sleek to hold the wind-borne dust.

This wealth with many a blessing Rustam gave,  
And fairly clinched the matter. When Pírán

Beheld the jewels in the brilliant cup

He praised and welcomed Rustam, seating him

Upon the turquoise throne, and said: "Depart

Content and enter with all confidence,

For I will lodge thee near me; be at ease

About thy goods, thou hast no foeman here.

Go fetch thy wares, seek buyers on all sides,

Make my son's house thy home, and be to me

As 'twere a kinsman."

Rustam answered thus:—

"I will abide here with my caravan,

O paladin! What goods I have are thine,

And 'twill be well with me be where I may,  
 But in that I have jewels of all kinds,  
 And must not lose one, by thy conquering fortune  
 We will remain outside in great content."

Pírán replied: "Go then and choose thy place,  
 And I will station guards for thy defence."

So Rustam chose a house, appointed it,  
 And filled the warehouse with his goods and packs.  
 News spread: "A caravan out of Írán  
 Hath visited the noble paladin,"  
 And buyers everywhere pricked up their ears  
 When tidings reached them of those jewel-merchants.  
 Those that would buy brocade or stuffs or gems  
 Departed toward the court-gate of Pírán,  
 And when the sun arose the world to grace  
 The warehouse had become a market-place.

V. 1117

## § 22

*How Manísha came before Rustam*

Manizha heard and hurried to the city;  
 Bare-headed, weeping bitterly, she came—  
 That daughter of Afrásiyáb—to Rustam,  
 And, wiping from her lashes with her sleeve  
 The tears of blood, blessed, greeted him, and said:—  
 "Enjoy'st thou life and wealth? God grant that thou  
 Mayst ne'er have reason to repent thy toils.  
 May heaven perform thy will, the evil eye  
 Not harm thee, and since thou hast heart of hope  
 May this thy travail not result in loss.  
 May wisdom ever be thy monitor,  
 And may Írán be blessed and fortunate.  
 What know'st thou of the warriors of the Sháh,  
 Of Gív, Gúdarz, and the Íránian host?  
 Have tidings of Bízhan not reached Írán?"

Will not his supplications aught avail,  
 That such a youth—a scion of Gúdarz—  
 May be released from irons? His feet are galled  
 With fetters and his hands with blacksmiths' rivets!  
 He hath been dragged in chains, made fast in bonds!  
 Poor wretch! his clothes are soaked in his own blood!  
 I get no rest myself for I must beg.  
 His lamentations fill mine eyes with tears."

V. 1118

Then Rustam in alarm roared out at her,  
 And drave her forth. "Be off!" he cried. "I know not  
 Khusrau or this young chief. I have no tidings  
 About Gúdarz and Gív, and thou hast chattered  
 My wits away."

Manízhá looked at Rustam,  
 Wept bitterly, and showered tears of blood  
 Upon her bosom in her wretchedness.  
 She said to him: "O chieftain full of wisdom!  
 Such heartless words as these become thee not.  
 Drive me not from thee if thou wilt not talk,  
 For I am stricken to the heart with anguish.  
 Is it indeed the custom of Írán  
 To tell the poor no news?"

He answered thus:—

"What ailed thee, woman, then? Did Áhriman  
 Give thee a foretaste of the Day of Doom?  
 Thou didst prevent my trafficking, and therefore  
 I rated thee; but do not take to heart  
 My hastiness, my thoughts were on my trade.  
 Besides I have no home within the land  
 Of Kai Khusrau, I know naught of Gúdarz  
 And Gív, and ne'er have travelled in those marches."

He bade to give the mendicant such food  
 As was at hand, then questioned her at large:—  
 "Why is't that fortune is so dark with thee?  
 Why ask about the Sháh's throne and Írán?  
 Why look upon the road that leadeth thither?"

She said to him : " Why ask about my case,  
 My travail, and my trouble ? From the mouth  
 Of yonder pit have I with aching heart  
 Made haste to thee, O noble man ! to ask  
 The latest news of Giv and of Gúdarz,  
 The warriors, and thou didst shout at me  
 As fighters shout ! Fear'st not the Judge of all ?  
 The daughter of Afrásiyáb am I—  
 Manízhā. Never had the sun beheld  
 My form unveiled, but now with eyes all blood,  
 And heart all pain, with sallow cheeks I roam  
 From door to door and gather barley bread,  
 So hath God willed ! Can fortune be more  
 wretched ?

V. 1119

Oh ! that Almighty God would end it for me,  
 Because resourceless and in yon deep pit  
 Bízhan beholdeth neither night nor day,  
 Nor sun nor moon, but yoked and riveted  
 In heavy bonds is praying God for death.  
 Hence are my griefs redoubled, hence these tears.  
 Thou mayst, if thou art journeying to Írán,  
 Hear of Gúdarz son of Kishwád, or see  
 About the court-gate Giv or gallant Rustam ;  
 Then say : ' Bízhan is in a pit and, save  
 Thou comest quickly, all is over with him.  
 If thou wouldst look upon him tarry not,  
 For iron is below him, stone above.' "

Thus Rustam answered her : " O fair of face !  
 Why rain these tears of love ? Why not invite  
 Thy nobles' intercession with thy sire ?  
 He may be pitiful, his blood may stir,  
 His liver burn ; but for my fear of him  
 I would have furnished thee with countless things."

Then said he to the cooks : " Bring forth for her  
 Of every kind of victual that she needeth."

He bade them fetch a bird hot from the spit.

And, as he wrapped it in soft bread,<sup>1</sup> slipped in,  
 As with a fairy's touch, his signet-ring,  
 And said: "Convey this to yon pit. A guide  
 Art thou to those who have no help beside."

## § 23

*How Bízhan heard of the Coming of Rustam*

V. 1120

Manízha came back to the pit's mouth, running,  
 The food wrapped in a cloth clasped to her breast,  
 And gave all to Bízhan. He saw amazed,  
 Called to the sun-faced damsel from the pit,  
 And said: "Where didst thou get the food, my love!  
 That thou hast speeded thus? How much of toil  
 And hardship hath befallen thee, and all  
 On mine account, my love and succourer!"

Manízha answered: "From a caravan.  
 A merchantman—a man possessed of wealth—  
 Came hither from Írán in search of gain,  
 With merchandise of all kinds great and small—  
 A holy man of Grace and understanding,  
 Who bringeth many jewels of all sorts.  
 He is a man of might and open heart,  
 And hath put up a booth before his house;  
 He gave to me the cloth just as it is:  
 'Pray for me to the Maker,' were his words.  
 'Go to the dungeon to the man in bonds,  
 And take from time to time what he may need.'"

Bízhan with hope amid his fears unrolled  
 The good bread, in perplexity began  
 To eat, observed the ring, and read the name,  
 Then burst out laughing in his joy and wonder.  
 It was a turquoise ring with "Rustam" graven

<sup>1</sup> Bread in Persia usually is made up into flexible loaves about one foot wide, two or three feet long, and half an inch thick.

Fine as a hair thereon. Bízhan beholding  
 The fruit upon the tree of faithfulness,  
 And wotting that the key to loose his sorrow  
 Had come, laughed out and that right royally,  
 So that the sound was heard outside the pit.  
 Manízha marvelled when she heard him laugh  
 From that dark 'dungeon fettered as he was,  
 And said: "The mad will laugh at their own acts!"

She paused in sheer amazement, then she said:—  
 "O destined to high fortune! why this laughter?  
 Why laugh, for thou discern'st not night from day?  
 What is the mystery? Reveal it! Tell me!  
 Doth better fortune show thee countenance?"

V. 1121

Bízhan replied to her: "I am in hope  
 That fortune will undo this grievous coil.  
 Now if with me thou wilt not break thy faith,  
 And make a covenant with me by oath,  
 I will reveal the matter every whit,  
 For 'though for fear of harm one go about  
 To sew up women's lips the words will out.'"

Manízha hearing this wept bitterly:—  
 "What hath malicious fortune brought," she said,  
 "Upon me? Woe is me! My day is done,  
 My heart is stricken, and mine eyes o'erflow!  
 I gave Bízhan my heart and home and wealth,  
 And now he treateth me with such distrust!  
 My father and my kin abandoned me,  
 I run about unveiled before the folk,  
 I gave withal my treasures up to spoil,  
 My crown, dínárs, and jewels, every whit.  
 I did hope in Bízhan but hope no more.  
 My world is darkened and mine eyes are dim,  
 For he concealeth secrets thus from me,  
 But Thou dost know me better, O my God!"

Bízhan replied: "'Tis true. Thou hast lost all  
 For me, and I," he added, "needs must tell thee,

O my belovéd mate and prudent comrade !  
 'Tis fit thou counsel me in all, my brain  
 Is void through suffering, so know that he—  
 The jewel-merchant, he whose cook provided  
 The dainty meal for thee—came to Túrán  
 On mine account, for else he had no need  
 Of gems. The Maker pitied me, and I  
 Perchance shall see earth's broad expanse. This man  
 Will free me from these longsome griefs and thee  
 From plodding to and fro in heat and anguish.  
 Do thou draw near and say to him in private :—  
 'O thou the paladin of this world's Kaians,  
 Affectionate of heart and good at need !  
 Inform me if thou art the lord of Rakhsh ?''

V. 1122

Manízha left the forest like the wind,  
 And gave the message. Rustam hearing her,  
 Who from afar had come to him for help,  
 Knew that Bizhan had made the secret known  
 To that slim Cypress with the rosy cheeks,  
 He pitied her and said : " My Fair ! may God  
 Ne'er take away from thee Bizhan's devotion.  
 What toils must thou have borne these many days  
 That thou hast grown so woe-begone with care !  
 Tell him : ' Yea ! God who heareth cries for help  
 Hath given unto thee the lord of Rakhsh,  
 Who from Zábul Íránward, from Írán  
 Túránward, trod the weary way for thee.'  
 When thou hast said this keep the matter secret,  
 And give good ear at night to any sound.  
 Collect dry fuel from the wood to-day  
 And, when night cometh, set the pile ablaze  
 To guide me to the opening of the pit."<sup>1</sup>

Manízha, joyful at the words and freed  
 From trouble, hastened to the mountain-top,  
 Where in the pit her lover was confined,

<sup>1</sup> Line inserted from P.

And said : " I have repeated all thy message  
 To that illustrious, glorious one whose steps  
 Are blessed. He answered : ' I indeed am he,  
 Whose name and sign are asked for by Bizhan.  
 O thou who goest with a heart so seared,  
 And washest both thy cheeks with tears of blood !  
 Say : " We are dappled like a pard with galls  
 On hands and girdlestead on thine account,  
 And now that we have certain news of thee  
 Thou shalt behold our deadly falchion's point,  
 Now will I rend the earth beneath my grasp,  
 And fling that seated boulder to the sky.'"  
 He said to me : ' As soon as heaven is dark,  
 And night freed from the clutches of the sun,  
 Set thou a fire, as 'twere a mount, ablaze,  
 And make it bright as day about the pit,  
 To guide me on the road.'"

V. 1123

Bizhan rejoiced,

Although a prisoner still, and, looking up  
 To Him, the Almighty Maker of the world,  
 Said : " O compassionate and holy Judge !  
 Thou art my Helper out of every ill,  
 Pierce with Thy shaft my foeman's heart and  
 soul.

Now do me right on him that did the wrong :  
 Thou knowest all my sorrows, pain, and grief.  
 Perchance I may regain my native land,  
 And leave behind me this malignant star !  
 And thou, my toil-worn mate, thou who hast made  
 Life, body, heart, and goods a sacrifice  
 For me, and in thy toil on my behalf  
 Hast counted every trouble as a joy,  
 Hast given up the crown and throne and girdle,  
 Thy parents and thy kindred and thy treasure !  
 If I do but escape this Dragon's clutch,  
 While I am still within the time of youth,

I, like the devotees who worship God,  
 Will run toward thee with mine arms outstretched,  
 And, like a servitor before a king,  
 Gird up my loins to make thee fair return.  
 Bear yet this toil, thy guerdon shall be great  
 In goods and treasure."

Bird-like to the boughs

She flew for wood, with arms full watched the sun,  
 And thought: "Oh! when will night rise o'er the  
 hills?"

When Sol had vanished and dark night had led  
 Its army o'er the mountain-tops what time  
 The world, its features hidden, taketh rest,  
 Manízhá went and set a-blaze a fire,  
 That scorched the eye of pitch-black night, and listened  
 To hear the clanging of the kettledrum  
 Which told that Rakhsh the brazen-hoofed had come.

### § 24

#### *How Rustam took Bizhan out of the Pit*

V. 1124 Then Rustam buckled on his Rúman mail,  
 With prayers for succour and support to Him,  
 Who is the Lord of sun and moon, and said:—  
 "Oh! may the eyes of evil men be blinded,  
 And may I have the strength to save Bizhan."

At his command the warriors girt themselves  
 With girdles of revenge, put on their steeds  
 The poplar saddles, and prepared for combat;  
 Then matchless Rustam led them toward the fire.  
 When he approached the boulder of Akwán,  
 Approached that pit of sorrow, smart, and anguish,  
 "Dismount," he told the seven warriors,  
 "And strive to clear the pit's mouth of the stone."  
 They strove in vain and sorely galled their hands.

Now while their sweat ran, for the stone stood still,  
The lion-chief alighted, hitched his skirt  
Of mail beneath his belt and, asking strength  
From God its source, grasped, raised, and hurled the  
boulder

Back to the forest of the land of Chín :  
Earth shook thereat. Then asked he of Bizhan  
With lamentable cries : " How camest thou  
To such a luckless plight ? Thy portion here  
Was wont to be all sweetness ; why hast thou  
Received then from the world a cup of poison ? "

Bizhan replied : " How fared the paladin  
Upon the way ? Thy greeting reached mine ear,  
And this world's poison was made sweet to me,  
Such as thou seest is my dwelling-place,  
Mine earth is iron and my heaven stone,  
While through exceeding anguish, hardship, sorrow,  
And toil I have renounced this Wayside Inn."

V. 1125

Said Rustam : " God had pity on thy life,  
And now, O man wise and magnanimous !  
There is one thing that I desire of thee :  
Grant pardon to Gurgin son of Milad  
For my sake, putting from thee hate and malice."

He answered : " O my friend ! how shouldst thou  
know

What conflicts have been mine ? And know'st thou not,  
O noble lion-man ! that which Gurgin  
Hath done to me ? If I behold him ever  
My vengeance shall bring Doomsday down on him."

" If thou show'st malice and wilt not attend  
To what I say," said Rustam, " I will leave thee  
Bound in the pit, and mount, and hie me home."

When Rustam's answer reached the captive's ear  
A wail went up from that strait prison-house  
As he replied : " The wretchedest am I  
Of warriors, of my kindred, and my people !

I must put up to-day too with the wrong—  
 The great wrong—which Gurgín hath done to me !  
 Yea I will do so and will be content ;  
 My heart shall rest from taking vengeance on him."

Then Rustam let his lasso down the pit,  
 And drew up thus Bízhan with fettered feet,  
 With naked body, with long hair and nails,  
 And wasted by affliction, pain, and want,  
 His form blood-boltered, and his visage wan  
 By reason of those bonds and rusty fetters.  
 Now Rustam cried aloud when he beheld  
 Bízhan with body hidden by the iron,  
 And putting forth his hands he snapped the chains  
 And bonds, and freed Bízhan from ring and fetter.  
 They went toward Rustam's house ; on one side of him  
 Bízhan rode, on the other side Manízha.

V. 1126

The youthful pair sat in their sorry plight,  
 And told their story to the paladin.  
 Then Rustam bade them bathe the young man's head,  
 And clothed him in new robes. When afterward  
 Gurgín approached and, prone upon the dust,  
 Sought to excuse his evil deeds, and writhed  
 For words so ill-advised, Bízhan condoned  
 The matter. Then they loaded up the camels,  
 And put the saddles on the steeds, while Rustam  
 Assumed his favourite mail and mounted Rakhsh.  
 The warriors drew forth their scimitars  
 And massive maces, sent the baggage on,  
 And dight themselves for strife. Ashkash the shrewd—  
 The army's Ear—went with the baggage-train.

Then matchless Rustam bade Bízhan : " Away,  
 And journey with Manízha and Ashkash,  
 For in my vengeance on Afrásiyáb  
 To-night I shall not eat, repose, or sleep.  
 Now will I do such exploits at his gate  
 That on the morn his troops shall laugh at him.

Thou hast endured enough with bonds and pit,  
And shouldst not share the fight."

Bízhān said: "Nay,  
I lead since ye for me renew the fray."

### § 25

*How Rustam attacked the Palace of Afrásiyáb by Night*

V. 1127

The baggage thus consigned to shrewd Ashkash,  
The seven warriors set forth with Rustam.  
With bridles on their saddle-bows they drew  
The sword of vengeance. While all slept within  
He reached the court-gate of Afrásiyáb,  
And, breaking with his hands both bolt and bar,  
Fierce as a lion flung himself inside.  
In every quarter sounds of tumult rose,  
Swords glittered, arrows rained, the chieftains' heads  
Were all struck off, their hands were filled with dust,  
Their mouths with blood, while Rustam in the porch  
Cried: "May sweet sleep distaste thee! For thy bed  
Thou hadst a throne, Bízhān had but a pit.  
Didst see an iron wall between us? I  
Am Rustam of Zábul, the son of Zál,  
And 'tis no season this for sleep and couching.  
I have burst through thy prison, door and bar,  
Where that huge boulder stood on guard for thee.  
Bízhān is free both head and foot from bonds:  
Let no one thus maltreat a son-in-law!  
Of fighting and revenge for Siyáwush,  
And dust from Rakhsh's feet upon the plain,  
Thou hadst enough yet fain wouldst slay Bízhān!  
I know thy wicked heart and drowsy head."

Bízhān too cried: "Dense and malignant Turkman!  
Bethink thee of yon throne, thy glorious seat,  
And me withal that stood in chains before thee.

I challenged combat leopard-like, but thou  
 Didst bind my hands together firm as rock.  
 Now see me free upon the plain—a man  
 Whom savage lions will not seek to fight."

V. 1128

Afrásiyáb exclaimed: "Hath sleep enfettered  
 My warriors? Cut off these men's retreat,  
 All ye who seek a signet or a crown!"

On all sides was the sound of hurried steps,  
 The bloodshed made a river at the gate,  
 And when a soldier of Túrán appeared  
 His place was void forthwith. The Íránians  
 Came seeking vengeance, but Afrásiyáb  
 Escaped by flight. The lord of Rakhsh rode in  
 Upon the carpets of brocade. The warriors  
 Took the fair slaves who caught them by the hand  
 Took too the noble steeds with poplar saddles,  
 Whose flaps of pard-skin were beset with gems,  
 Then left the royal palace, packed the baggage,  
 And stayed not in Túrán but hastened on  
 To save the booty and avoid mishap.  
 So spent was Rustam that he scarce endured  
 His helmet, while the horses and their riders  
 Had no pulse left. He sent to bid the host:—  
 "Unsheathe your vengeful scimitars; no doubt  
 The earth will be bedimmed by horses' hoofs,  
 Because Afrásiyáb will gather him  
 A mighty host whose spears will veil the sun."

They marched along, those warlike cavaliers,  
 All ready for the fray, with sharpened lances  
 And reins well gathered in. A scout ascended  
 The look-out and from far surveyed the route  
 Whereby the Turkman cavaliers would come.  
 Manízhá then was sitting in her tent;  
 Before her were her handmaids and her guide,

V. 1129

And matchless Rustam spoke to her this saw:—  
 "If musk be poured away the scent will stay."

Such is the fashion of this Wayside Inn,  
Whiles sweets and smiles, whiles travail and chagrin !

## § 26

*How Afrāsiyāb went to fight with Rustam*

When Sol rose o'er the hills the Turkman horsemen  
Prepared to march. The city was astir,  
And, thou hadst said, a deafening clamour rose.  
Before the court-gate of Afrāsiyāb  
The troops formed rank, the great men loosed their  
loins,

And bowed their heads in dust before the king,  
Exclaiming : " Things with us have passed all bounds !  
What must be done ? This business of Bīzhan  
Will be a lasting stigma, the Íránians  
Will call us men no more, but women armed."

Thereat Afrāsiyāb raged like a pard,  
And bade them fight for shame. He bade Pirán  
To bind the tymbals on, and thus he said :—  
" This flouting from Írán is over-much !"

The brass blared at the court-gate of the king,  
The troops were all in motion in Túrán,  
The warriors ranked themselves before the palace,  
Arose the din of trump and Indian bell,  
And to the frontier from Túrán a host  
Marched that left earth no surface save the sea.

Now when the Íránian watchman from the look-out  
Saw earth heave ocean-like he came to Rustam,  
And said : " Make ready, for the world is black  
With dust of horsemen !"

V. 1130

Rustam made reply :—

" We fear not, we will strew it on their hands."

He left Manizha with the baggage, donned  
His battle-mail, went to a height, observed

The foe, and roared out like a savage lion.  
That gallant horseman spake a proverb, saying :—  
"What doth a fox weigh in a lion's claws?"

Then to his valiant warriors he shouted :—  
"The wage of war confronteth us to-day.  
Where are the swords and iron-piercing darts?  
Where are the ox-head maces and the spears?  
Now is the season to display your prowess,  
And rank yourselves upon the battlefield."

Anon arose a sound of clarions,  
While matchless Rustam mounted Rakhsh and led  
His army plainward from the heights what time  
The foe was seen approaching.<sup>1</sup> Both the hosts  
Deployed upon that broad expanse and formed  
Two camps empanoplied. Then Rustam chose  
His battle-ground, whereat the world grew black  
With horse-raised dust. Ashkash and Gustaham  
Were on the right with many cavaliers,  
Upon the left were Zanga and Ruhhám.  
All rose superior to that conflict. Rustam,  
The warriors' warden and the host's support,  
Was at the centre with Bízhan the son  
Of Giv. Behind the host was Mount Bistún,  
In front a citadel of scimitars.

Afrásiyáb, when he beheld that host,  
With Rustam who was seen commanding it,  
In dudgeon donned his armour for the battle,  
And bade his troops to halt. He drew them up  
In due array against the foe. The earth  
Was hidden and the air like indigo.  
The left wing he intrusted to Pírán,  
While brave Húmán departed to the right;  
The centre he consigned to Garsiwaz  
And Shída; he himself o'erlooked the whole.

<sup>1</sup> "aussitôt que l'armée ennemie eut paru dans le défilé de la montagne opposée" (Mohl).

The matchless Rustam went about the host,  
 And seemed a sable mountain in his mail.  
 He cried : "Thou luckless Turkman, thou disgrace  
 To province, crown, and throne! thou hast no heart  
 To fight like cavaliers, yet shamest not  
 Before thy warriors, but assailest us,  
 And coverest the earth with men and steeds,  
 Though when the armies grapple I shall see  
 Thy back toward the fight. Hast thou not heard  
 Those sayings of old times which Zâl repeateth :—  
 'No lion is affrighted at a plain  
 Of onagers; stars ape the sun in vain;  
 The lusty mountain-sheep if it shall hear  
 A wolf's claws named will shiver, heart and ear;  
 No fox is daring, try he e'er so much,  
 No onagers the lion's claws will touch'  
 Be never king as light of wit as thou,  
 Or he will give his kingdom to the winds.  
 Upon this plain thou shalt not get away  
 Alive and scathless from my hands to-day."

V. 1131

## § 27

*How Afrāsiyâb was defeated by the Irānians*

As soon as that grim Turkman heard the words  
 He shook, drew one quick breath, then cried in fury :—  
 "O warriors of Tûrân! are we engaged  
 In banquet, feast, or battle on this field?  
 Ye must endure hard toil in this emprise,  
 For I will give you treasure in return."

They shouted when they heard the monarch's words;  
 The sun so gloomed with dust that thou hadst said :—  
 "Earth is submerged!" Upon the elephants  
 The drums were beaten, horns and trumpets blown.  
 The warriors with their breastplates formed a wall

V. 1132

Of iron on the battlefield. The plain  
 Shook and the hills re-echoed with the shouts  
 Raised by the cavaliers upon both sides;  
 The trenchant swords flashed mid the clouds of dust;  
 Thou wouldst have said: "The Day of Doom hath  
 come!"

Steel sparths descended like a storm of hail  
 Upon the coats of mail, the helms, and casques,  
 While at the gleam of Rustam's dragon-flag  
 The bright sun's face grew azure-dim; he veiled  
 The air with arrows, "Smearing," thou hadst said,  
 "The sun with pitch." Where'er he urged on Rakhsh  
 He trampled on the heads of cavaliers.  
 Grasped in his hand he bore an ox-head mace,  
 And seemed a dromedary broken loose.  
 He came forth from the centre like a wolf,  
 And scattered all the foemen's vast array.  
 Then horsemen's heads were shed as leaves are shed  
 Before the blast, and fortune left the Turkmans.  
 Swift as the wind Ashkash upon the right  
 Sought to engage the swordsman Garsiwaz,  
 Gúrgín, Farhád, and brave Ruhhám o'erthrew  
 The left wing of the monarch of Túrán,  
 While in the centre dexterous Bízhan  
 Esteemed the battlefield a banquet-hall.  
 Blood flowed in streams, the Turkman monarch's  
 standard

V. 1133

Sank, he beheld his fortunes all averse,  
 The warriors of Túrán all slain, so flung  
 His Indian scimitar away and, mounting  
 A fresh steed, fled attended by his nobles  
 Toward Túrán, balked of revenge, and followed  
 By lion-taking Rustam, who rained mace  
 And arrow on the enemy, and blasted  
 For two leagues, thou hadst said, like dragon grim  
 The warriors. A thousand cavaliers

Were captured. Rustam then returned to camp  
 In order that he might divide the spoil,  
 And, when the elephants were loaded, he  
 Marched back to Kai Khusrau victoriously.

## § 28

*How Rustam returned to Kai Khusrau*

When tidings reached the gallant Sháh: "The Lion  
 Hath come back from the Wood victorious;  
 Bízhan is free from prison and from bonds,  
 And from the clutches of his dragon-foe;  
 The army of Túrán is overthrown,  
 The foe's whole purpose foiled," he went rejoicing,  
 And fell upon his face, before the Maker.

Whenas Gúdarz and Gív received the news  
 They hasted to the conquering Sháh. A shout  
 Went up, troops mustered, and the tymbal-players  
 Set forth, the trumpet sounded at the gate,  
 The soldiers shouted. All the riding-ground  
 Was black with chargers' hoofs, the kettledrums  
 Roared through the city, horsemen proudly pranced.  
 And mighty elephants tusked up the earth.  
 Before the army went the drums and horns,  
 Gúdarz and Tús came after with the standard.  
 Upon one side were pards and lions chained,  
 Upon the other were brave cavaliers.  
 In such wise the victorious Sháh commanded  
 The troops to go to meet their paladin.  
 They set forth on their journey troop on troop;  
 The earth was mountain-like with warriors.  
 When they distinguished Rustam from the rest,  
 Gúdarz and Gív alighted, as did all  
 The other mighty men and Rustam also,  
 To whom both young and old did reverence.

V. 1134

Gúdarz and Gív saluted him and said :—  
 " O thou illustrious and valiant chief !  
 May God be thy protection now and ever,  
 May sun and moon both circle to thy wish.  
 Of thee the lion learneth to be bold,  
 Of thee may heaven weary nevermore !  
 Thou hast made all our kindred slaves to thee  
 Through whom we have recovered our lost son.  
 Thou hast delivered us from pain and grief,  
 And made us all thy servants in Írán."

The chiefs remounted and approached in pomp  
 The palace of the monarch of the world,  
 And, when that chief—the refuge of the host—  
 Drew near the city of the king of kings,  
 The Sháh himself,—the warden of the troops  
 And crown of chiefs—went out to welcome him.  
 When Rustam by the pomp knew that the Sháh  
 Had come, he lighted and did homage, grieved  
 That Kai Khusráu had come so far. The world-lord  
 Took Rustam in a close embrace and said :—  
 " Thou Stay of chieftains and thou Soul of honour !  
 As glorious as the sun are all thy gests,  
 And thine achievements broadcast through the world."

Then quickly taking by the hand Bízhan,  
 Who was abashed before his Sháh and sire,<sup>1</sup>  
 The matchless Rustam brought, presented him,  
 Rose to his feet, and made the bent back straight.  
 Thereafter he delivered to the Sháh  
 A thousand captives from Túrán in bonds.  
 The monarch blessed him lovingly and said :—  
 " May heaven ever favour thy desires,  
 May thy hand flourish, may thy heart rejoice,  
 And thy pure body 'scape all hurt from foes.  
 How blest is Zál, who will bequeath the world  
 A Memory like thee ! Blest is Zábul,

<sup>1</sup> Reading with P.

Whose milk hath nourished such undaunted heroes.  
 Blest is Írán, blest are its warriors,  
 Possessing such a paladin as thee;  
 Yet is my fortune higher than them all  
 In having such a servant of my throne.  
 Thou art Írán's crown and the chieftains' stay,  
 And lacking thee I care not for the world."

Then said the monarch of the world to Giv:—  
 "The Almighty's purposes toward thee are good,  
 Who hath restored to thee by Rustam's hand  
 Thy son, thy well beloved, and in triumph."

Giv blessed the Sháh and said: "Live and rejoice  
 As long as time shall be, may thy head flourish  
 Through Rustam ever, and may he possess  
 The heart of glorious Zál with happiness."

### § 29

#### *How Kai Khusráu made a Feast*

Khusrau commanded: "Let the board be spread,  
 And call the chiefest nobles to the feast."

Now when the guests had risen from the table  
 They had the place set for a drinking-bout.  
 Fair slaves illumed the hall, with cup-bearers  
 And earringed harpers harping on their harps;  
 Their heads were crowned with massive coronets  
 Of gold with patterns traced thereon in gems.  
 All cheeks were ruddy as brocade of Rúm,  
 And fairy fingers made the harps resound.  
 There were gold chargers full of purest musk,  
 And in the front a layer of rose-water.  
 The Sháh, resplendent with imperial Grace,  
 Shone like a full moon o'er a straight-stemmed cypress.  
 The paladins, the lieges of Khusrau,  
 All left the palace, well bemused.

V. 1136

Next morning  
 Came Rustam to the court, with open heart

And girded loins, for leave to his him home.  
 He took much prudent counsel with the Sháh,  
 Who gave commandment, and a change of raiment  
 Bejewelled, with a tunic and a crown,  
 A vase of royal gems, a hundred steeds  
 All saddled and a hundred laden camels,  
 A hundred fair-faced handmaids ready girl,  
 A hundred slaves adorned with torques of gold,  
 Were brought before the master of the world,  
 Who gave them all to Rustam of Zábul.  
 That hero kissed the ground and then stood upright.  
 He set upon his head that royal crown,  
 He bound that royal girdle round his loins,  
 Did homage to the Sháh, then left the presence,  
 And made his preparations for Sístán.  
 Next to the nobles that had been with Rustam  
 In toil and fight, in happiness and sorrow,  
 The Sháh gave gifts, to each in his degree :  
 They left the palace of Khusrau, rejoicing.

The Sháh, when he had finished with the chiefs,  
 And sat at leisure on his throne, commanded  
 Bízhan to come, and spake of all his troubles,  
 While for his part Bízhan informed the Sháh  
 At large of that strait dungeon, of his conflicts,  
 And what had happened in those evil days.  
 The Sháh forgave him and much pitied too  
 The pains and sorrows of the luckless damsel,  
 Called for a hundred garments of brocade  
 Of Rúm, gem-patterned on a ground of gold,  
 A crown, ten purses also of dínárs,  
 Girl-slaves and carpets and all kinds of wealth,  
 And said thus to Bízhan : " These precious things  
 Bear to the lady of the mournful soul,  
 Use her not hardly, speak no chilling word,  
 Consider all that thou hast brought on her.  
 Go through this world rejoicing by her side,

And take thou heed of time's vicissitudes,  
How it will raise one to the heights of heaven,  
And bear him all unharmed by care and anguish,  
Then how that heaven will fling him to the dust,  
Where all is fear, anxiety, and dread !  
The man whom fortune cherished on its breast  
It casteth wantonly to depths of need,  
And raiseth thence another to the throne,  
And setteth on his head a jewelled crown !  
The world is not ashamed of such ill doings,  
For it respecteth no one ; and, although  
For ever dominating good and bad,  
Ensueeth not the peace of any one."

Such is the manner of our earthly lot !  
It leadeth us alike to good and ill,  
And noble hearts may live untroubled still  
So long as poverty oppresseseth not.

The story of Gúdarz I next unfold  
And of Pífrán ; that of Bízhan is told ,  
As I have heard it in the tales of old.



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<sup>2</sup> See Vol. I. p. 396 *note*.

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<sup>1</sup> See Vol. I. p. 396 *note*.

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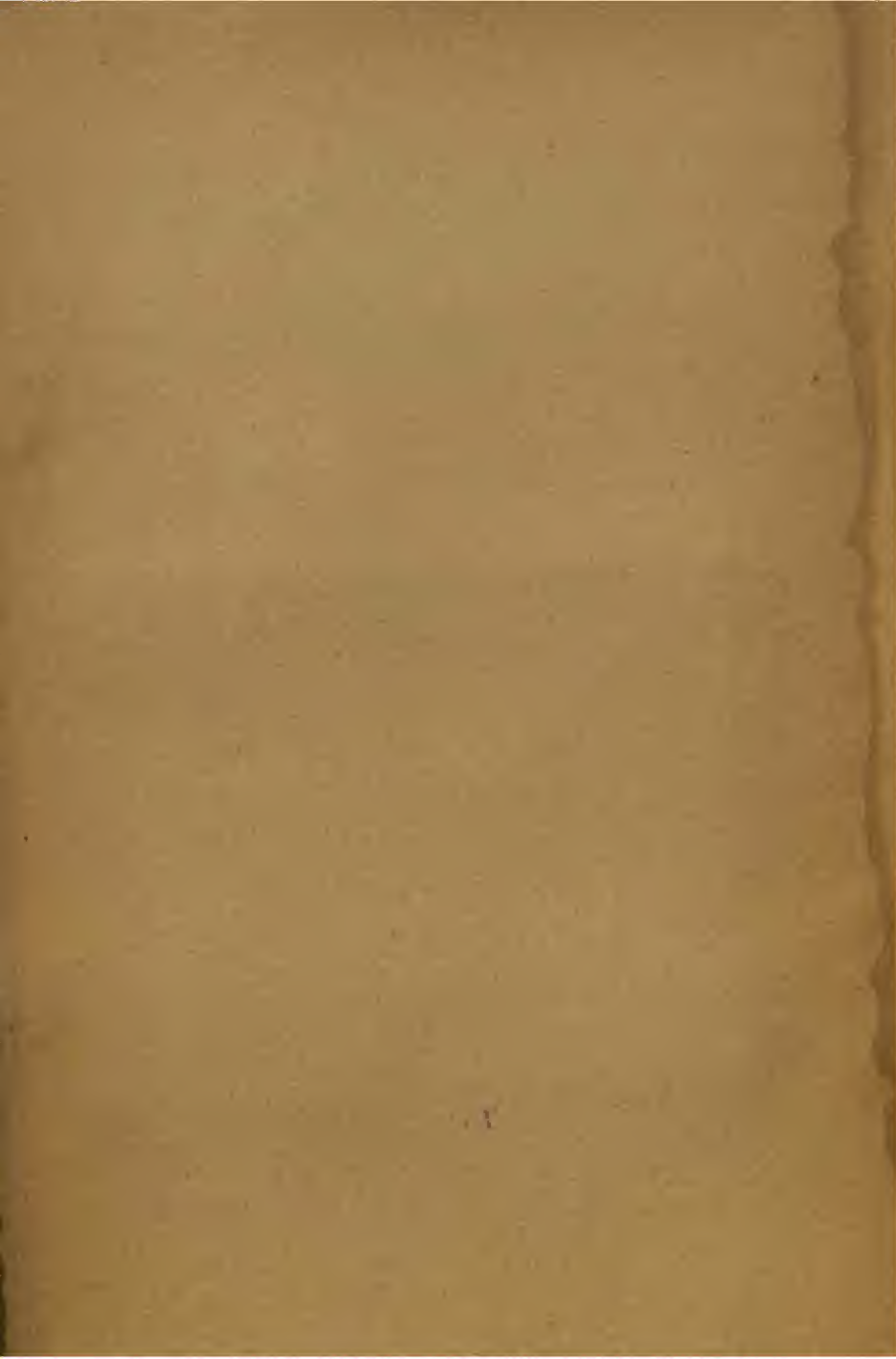




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